

The Role of Space in the שירי המעלות (Psalms 120–134)

The changing face of psalm studies over the past two decades or so opens new avenues for the interpretation of the book⁽¹⁾. The traditional focus upon the form and social setting of individual poems is expanded to include the relationship between poems and the structure and intent of the Psalter itself. Before this trend became fashionable Psalms 120–134 were already regarded as a single, interrelated collection intended for use in the post-exilic community⁽²⁾. A number of studies⁽³⁾ representing diverging exegetical perspectives⁽⁴⁾ all draw attention to similarities between the fifteen poems⁽⁵⁾. However, inadequate attention has been paid to the “story”⁽⁶⁾ of the שירי המעלות,

(¹) D.M. HOWARD, “Recent trends in Psalms study”, *The face of Old Testament studies*. A survey of contemporary approaches (Eds. D.W. BAKER – B.T. ARNOLD) (Grand Rapids 1999) 329; N. FÜGLISTER, “Die Verwendung und das Verständnis der Psalmen und des Psalters um die Zeitenwende”, *Beiträge zur Psalmenforschung. Psalm 2 und 22* (Hrsg. J. SCHREINER) (FzB 60; Würzburg 1988) 325–329; E. ZENGER, “Der Psalter als Buch. Beobachtungen zu seiner Entstehung, Komposition und Funktion”, *Der Psalter in Judentum und Christentum* (Hrsg. E. ZENGER) (HBS 18; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1998) 10–11.

(²) G.H. WILSON, *The editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBLDS 76; Chico 1985), 147. On the post-exilic date of Book V cf. WILSON, *Editing*, 227; M. MILLARD, *Die Komposition des Psalters*. Ein formgeschichtlicher Ansatz (FAT 9; Tübingen 1994) 38–39.

(³) L.D. CROW, *The Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120–134)*. Their place in Israelite history and religion (SBLDS 148; Atlanta 1996) 1–27; E. ZENGER, “Der Zion als Ort der Gottesnähe. Beobachtungen zum Weltbild des Wallfahrtspsalters Ps 120–134”, *Gottes Nähe im Alten Testament* (Hrsg. G. EBERHARDT – K. LIESS) (SBS 202; Stuttgart 2004) 85.

(⁴) For a discussion of the various approaches cf. CROW, *Songs of Ascents*, 1–27; F.M.T. DE LIAGRE BÖHL – B. GEMSER, *De Psalmen* (Nijkerk 1968) 170–172; ZENGER, “Zion als Ort”, 85–95.

(⁵) Cf. A.G. HUNTER, *Psalms* (Old Testament Readings; London – New York 1999) 182–191, 229–248; T. WILLI, “Das שיר המעלות. Zion und der Sitz im Leben der «Aufstiegslieder» Psalm 120–124”, *Prophetie und Psalmen*. Festschrift für Klaus Seybold zum 65. Geburtstag (Hrsg. B. HUWYLER – H-P. MATHYS – B. WEBER) (AOAT 280; Münster 2001) 156–157.

(⁶) Contemporary Psalms research looks for a “story line” running through the Psalter (HOWARD, “Recent trends”, 333). J. FOKKELMAN, *Reading Biblical narrative*. A practical guide (Leiden 1999) 172–177 questions the traditional distinction between prose and poetry in Ancient Near Eastern literature. The appli-

the progression of ideas when the collection is read as a unit in the context of Book V of the Psalter. This study exploits one area where there is a clear and significant progression of thought and a recurring and theologically meaningful pattern when these poems are read as a coherent unit, namely the concept of “space”⁽⁷⁾.

I. “Space”: theoretical considerations

1. *General observations*

Narratologists emphasise the importance of the concept of “space” in narrative art. In narratives space implies much more than “place”, it is a dimension of the story as such, present in the text even when not mentioned explicitly for the simple reason that every story must be situated at a place and in a space of some kind⁽⁸⁾. Space has emotional undertones; it contributes to the atmosphere of the story. In ancient, written narratives the text is the actual space in which the story exists⁽⁹⁾. Space can be defined as “everything in the narrative that is

cation of narrative techniques might be fruitful in discovering a “story line” in poetic texts.

⁽⁷⁾ According to P.M. VENTER, “Spatiality in Psalm 29”, *Psalms and liturgy* (Eds. D.J. HUMAN – C.J.A. VOS) (JSOTSS 410; London 2004) 235 the spatial analysis of biblical literature can provide a “window” into the ancient world. According to C.V. CAMP, “Storied space, or, Ben Sira “tells” a “temple”, AAR/SBL Annual Meeting, Constructs of the Social and Cultural Worlds of Antiquity Group, November 20, 1999 (Hyperlink: <http://www.guildzone.org>) 1-18 the spatial “story” of a poetic text can be a point of departure to discover the ideology of the text.

⁽⁸⁾ M. BAL, *De theorie van vertellen en verhalen. Inleiding in de narratologie* (Muiderberg 1986) 101; A.P. BRINK, *Vertelkunde. ‘n Inleiding tot die lees van verhalende tekste* (Pretoria – Kaapstad 1987) 107-108. G. PRINCE, *Narratology. The form and function of narrative* (Janua Linguarum Series Maior 108; Berlin – New York – Amsterdam) 32 observes that the place of narration plays no role whatsoever in many famous narratives. It emphasises the importance of the distinction between “place” and “space”. He states that it is practically impossible to narrate a series of events without establishing a set of temporal or temporally bound relationships between narration and narrated. A narrative cannot exist without space and time. Even if no place is explicitly mentioned the reader constructs space in the process of reading or deduces it from the objects mentioned and the relationship between characters and objects.

⁽⁹⁾ L.L. THOMPSON, *Introducing biblical literature*. A more fantastic country (New Jersey 1978) 3-4 emphasises that modern readers discover the world of the Bible mainly through words. Three worlds interact in the interpretation of bibli-

used... to create a situation where something happens to someone”⁽¹⁰⁾, as such it defines the “climate” of the narrative. Space becomes an important aspect of the narrative’s focalization⁽¹¹⁾ or point of view. Space contributes to the “perception” created by the narrative, and that perception is “a psychological process, strongly dependent on the position of the perceiving body”⁽¹²⁾.

2. Classification of space

If the definition above is accepted, space is a complex concept⁽¹³⁾. Studies on narrative techniques in Biblical Hebrew pay very little attention to the intricate nuances of the concept⁽¹⁴⁾. No single source

cal stories: the socio-historical milieu from which the work arose, the world of the reader or hearer, and the world created in the work itself. The “created” world of the ancient narrative is not identical to the ancient world in which it arose. The “created” world of Biblical stories has its own time and space and action is limited in different ways from the “real” world.

⁽¹⁰⁾ BRINK, *Vertelkunde*, 108.

⁽¹¹⁾ M. BAL, “Focalization”, *Narratology*. An introduction (Eds. S. ONEGA – J.A.G. LANDA) (Longman Critical Readers; London – New York 1996) 118 defines focalization as “the relationship between the ‘vision,’ the agent that sees and that which is seen”.

⁽¹²⁾ BAL, “Focalization”, 116. In the field of social-scientific studies on spatiality (so-called critical spatiality) there is a growing awareness that space and perceptions of spatiality are critical factors in understanding and analysing societies. Cf. in this regard J.W. FLANAGAN, “Ancient perceptions of space/ perceptions of ancient space”, *Semeia* 87 (1999) 16; V.H. MATTHEWS, “Physical space, imagined space, and “lived space” in Ancient Israel”, *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 33 (2003) 12.

⁽¹³⁾ According to J.L. BERQUIST, “Theories of space and construction of the ancient world”, AAR/SBL Annual Meeting, Constructs of the Social and Cultural Worlds of Antiquity Group, November 20, 1999 (Hyperlink: <http://www.guildzone.org>) 1-20 space includes concepts such as distance, height, width, breadth, orientation, and direction, and human perceptions, constructions, and uses of these aspects. So-called “critical spatiality” recognises that all aspects of space are human constructions that are socially contested. There are three different “types” of space present in a narrative: the narrator’s space (i.e. the social-historical milieu of the narrator), the narrating space (i.e. the world of the reader or hearer) and the narrated space (i.e. the world created by the work itself). Cf. BRINK, *Vertelkunde*, 109. This study focuses on the narrated space created by Psalms 120–134.

⁽¹⁴⁾ A case in point is the study of S. BAR-EFRAT, *Narrative art in the Bible* (JSOTSS 70; Sheffield 1989) 184-195. He acknowledges the importance of space in Biblical narratives but also indicates that it is difficult to grasp the exact impact of reference to places for the simple fact that modern readers are unfa-

contains a systematic classification of the concept. The most comprehensive classification of space is provided by scholars working in the field of social-scientific criticism, specifically those working with the concept of "critical spatiality"⁽¹⁵⁾. Building upon the work of postmodern geographers like Lefebvre and Soja⁽¹⁶⁾ they distinguish between "firstspace" (physical space, concrete space, perceived space, i.e. the description of a place or an environment); "secondspace" (imagined space, conceived space, abstract space, i.e. the description of space on an emotive level where space touches upon the psychological, ideological, religious and philosophical dimensions of human behaviour); and "thirdspace" (lived space, the confrontation between various social groups and their space, reflecting the spatial ideology of society)⁽¹⁷⁾. A set of rules governs the perceptions and actual spatial experiences of various social classes and social groups. The "lived space" of a king differs from that of a commoner, of a male from that of a female.

The world created by the stories and poems of the Hebrew Bible is peculiar in the sense that it realistically represents the life of man with all his limitations, but brings that world into dialogue with a construct of the religious imagination that passes beyond those limits. In essence the Hebrew Bible is concerned with this divine/human dialogue. Mankind is represented from one of two perspectives: at-center (properly orientated to his world), or off-center (in chaos and disorientation)⁽¹⁸⁾. In the Book of Psalms in particular the world is seen from the vantage point of an individual, an "I" who experiences the world from an interior viewpoint⁽¹⁹⁾. Space in the Book of Psalms

iar with those places. He focuses upon space as a concrete concept. Cf. also the cursory discussion of space in FOKKELMAN, *Reading*, 97-111. The discussion above indicates that the concept of space is much more complicated than the mere description of physical place.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Cf. J.L. BERQUIST, "Critical spatiality and the uses of theory", AAR/SBL Annual Meeting, Constructions of Ancient Space Seminar, October 2002 (Hyperlink: <http://www.cwru.edu>) 1-15.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Cf. the overview in BERQUIST, "Critical spatiality", 4-5.

⁽¹⁷⁾ FLANAGAN, "Ancient perceptions" 26-30; MATTHEWS, "Physical space", 12-13.

⁽¹⁸⁾ THOMPSON, *Introducing*, 13. The same tendency is present in the narratives of other cultures in the Ancient Near East.

⁽¹⁹⁾ THOMPSON, *Introducing*, 53 observes that 123 of the 150 psalms are (at least in part) written from a first person perspective. Cf. also FOKKELMAN, *Reading*, 177.

is created by, experienced by, and seen through the eyes of the "I", whether he/she is a commoner or a king, a member of the religious community or an individual grappling with complex and bewildering circumstances. The "I" experiences his/her world either off-centre or at-centre. To be off-centre is to be in negative space, to experience distress, illness, persecution, moral failure, divine judgement, to live in the presence of enemies, even in the face of death, far from the presence of YHWH. To be at-centre is to be in positive space, to experience harmony, health, peace, reconciliation, to live in the presence of YHWH and in harmony with the community of the faithful.

In a very special sense temple in Jerusalem becomes the meeting point between the human (concrete) world and the divine (mythological) world. Jerusalem becomes the centre of the universe⁽²⁰⁾. There the cosmic planes intersect to create a three-story universe: a vertical plane intersects earth and extends down into the chaotic waters below, and the same plane extends upwards into heaven. To "ascend" is to be close to Yahweh, to experience life. To "descend" is to sink down into the Deep, the realm of death⁽²¹⁾. To be "far" from the temple amounts to be far from YHWH, to be "near" the temple is to experience YHWH's presence⁽²²⁾. The highest ideal of the "I" is to be at-centre for there he experiences wholeness, peace, and blessedness. Concepts such as inside/outside, high/low, far/near, clean/unclean, holy/unholy contribute towards the psychological, ideological and moral perspective of the text. They define lived space as safe or unsafe; comfortable or uncomfortable; acceptable or unacceptable.

All of this implies that space is not static but dynamic and relational⁽²³⁾, there is movement through space, e.g. from "concrete" space toward "abstract" space or from "negative" space towards

⁽²⁰⁾ MILLARD, *Komposition*, 188-227 indicates that it is especially during the post-exilic period that this pre-occupation with Jerusalem as religious centre manifested in the redaction of books such as Isaiah (cf. Isa 1; 12; 56-66) and the Psalter (cf. especially so-called "pilgrimage psalms" such as the Egyptian Hallel and the Songs of Ascents).

⁽²¹⁾ THOMPSON, *Introducing*, 60-64.

⁽²²⁾ B. JANOWSKI, "Die heilige Wohnung des Höchsten. Kosmologische Implikationen der Jerusalemer Tempeltheologie", *Gottesstadt und Gottesgarten. Zu Geschichte und Theologie des Jerusalemer Tempels* (Hrsg. O. KEEL – E. ZENGER) (Quaestiones disputatae 191; Freiburg – Basel 2002) 27.

⁽²³⁾ BERQUIST, "Theories of space", 7.

“positive” space. There are no defined boundaries between first-, second-, or thirdspace. In a very real sense the one is the other⁽²⁴⁾.

II. The concept of “space” in the שירי המעלות

1. *Space in Psalms 120–134: an overview*⁽²⁵⁾

If space is defined as indicated in the previous paragraph, it becomes one of the most important concepts in the שירי המעלות. In fact it is mentioned in every single poem⁽²⁶⁾. The spatial “story” of the שירי המעלות begins at a very low point in Psalm 120. A first person singular petitioner describes his lived space as “in distress” (1a). He lives amongst people of “lying lips” (2a) and a “deceitful tongue” (3b). In terms of concrete, geographical space the poet laments the fact that he “dwelled”⁽²⁷⁾ in “Meshech” (5a) and “lived” amongst the “tents of Kedar” (5b)⁽²⁸⁾. These regions signify the northern and southern extremities of the experience of being in exile. As binary opposites they constitute a merism, emphasising the experience, any experience, of being in exile and danger, far from the saving presence of Yahweh⁽²⁹⁾. It is also hinted at in 6a-7b. The poet “lived” for “too

⁽²⁴⁾ FLANAGEN, “Ancient perceptions”, 29.

⁽²⁵⁾ It is impossible to provide detailed exegetical commentary on every poem in the collection. The content of the poems are discussed only in terms of its relevance for the theme of this study.

⁽²⁶⁾ Hunter, *Psalms*, 253-254 acknowledges the importance of place in the שירי המעלות, but defines the term narrowly as geographical place. Therefore he only recognises its presence in Pss 120; 122; 125; 132 and 134. DE LIAGRE BÖHL – GEMSER, *Psalmen*, 172 indicate that מעלות in the superscript of all fifteen psalms do not only refer to a concrete pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but also to an abstract “moving up” from negative space towards positive space.

⁽²⁷⁾ גרתי emphasises the poet’s lack of legal status during his sojourn away from home (cf. H-J. KRAUS, *Psalms 60–150* (Augsburg – Minneapolis 1989) 424.

⁽²⁸⁾ מִשֶּׁךְ refers to an area on the Upper-Euphrates (cf. Gen 10,2) near the Black Sea northwest of Palestine (cf. D.M. WILLIAMS, *Psalms 73–150* (The Communicator’s Commentary XIV; Dallas 1989) 402). קֶדָר refers to a Bedouin tribe on the rim of the Syrian-Arabian desert southwest of Palestine. H. GUNKEL, *Die Psalmen* (GHAT II/2; Göttingen 1986 [first published 1929]) 537 proposes a literal interpretation of the terms, but emends מִשֶּׁךְ to מִשָּׁא, geographically speaking in the same area as קֶדָר. KRAUS, *Psalms*, 424 regards the reference as symbolic. The poet wants to emphasise that he “lived among barbarians” (cf. also WILLIAMS, *Psalms*, 402).

⁽²⁹⁾ A. DEISSLER, *Die Psalmen* (Düsseldorf 1964) 490; MITCHELL, *Message*, 117-118; ZENGER, “Zion als Ort”, 102-103.

long" (6a) amongst those "who hate peace" (6b). He is "peace-loving" (7a) but lives amongst people who are always ready "for war" (7b). His only hope is the fact that once he "cried" (1b) "to YHWH" (1a) and YHWH "answered" (1b)⁽³⁰⁾. Once the mythological world touched the human, concrete world, therefore he can urgently pray "YHWH save me!" (2a), and expect that his enemies will become the target of "sharp arrows of a warrior" (4a) with "burning coals of the broom tree" (4b).

Psalm 121 contains numerous hints that the poet is "on the move" or "ascending"⁽³¹⁾. The poem describes a journey from negative to positive space, from being off-centre to being at-centre, with emphasis upon a physical journey. The rhetorical question in 1ab hints at this journey. A first person singular narrator describes his reality with the words: "I lift my eyes to the mountains" (1a). In the same breath he asks: "where does my help comes from?" (1b). Although confronted by obstacles and danger⁽³²⁾, he is on the move upwards. The sense of movement is emphasised by expressions such as "he will not let your foot slip" (3a) and "YHWH protects your coming and your going" (8a). His answer: "My help is from Yahweh who made heaven and earth" (2ab) indicates the possibility that the human and divine plane can intersect (cf. 120,1a-2a) to the benefit of the petitioner. The positive meeting between the human and divine spheres is emphasised in numerous ways: by means of the repetition of the *Leitwort* שָׁמַר (cf. 3b.4b.5a.7a.7b.8a); the assurance that YHWH does not "slumber"

⁽³⁰⁾ 1ab is regarded as a recollection of past redemption, 2ab as a plea for help in a current crisis. The same pattern occurs in Psalm 126 (cf. HUNTER, *Psalms*, 193).

⁽³¹⁾ Formcritical studies classify the poem as a cultic dialogue between petitioner and priest at the occasion of the farewell from the sanctuary after a pilgrimage festival (cf. GUNKEL, *Psalmen*, 539; KRAUS, *Psalms*, 427). Read in isolation the interpretation is possible. Reading Psalm 121 as part of the "story" of the שירי המעלות indicates that it is not a liturgy, but a description of the dangerous and uncertain journey (cf. DEISSLER, *Psalmen*, 493; MITCHELL, *Message*, 118; GOULDER, *Psalms of the return*, 42).

⁽³²⁾ Some interpret "mountains" as a reference to the dwellings of gods (cf. S. TERRIEN, *The Psalms*. Strophic structure and theological commentary (Critical Eerdmans Commentary; Grand Rapids 2003) 812 who sees a veiled reference to the danger of syncretism in 1a). Others interpret the reference literally — the mountains are obstacles, symbols of danger (cf. DEISSLER, *Psalmen*, 495; K. SEYBOLD, *Die Psalmen* (HAT I/15; Tübingen 1996) 478. ZENGER, "Zion als Ort", 105 interprets it metaphorically as everything that endangers the life of the petitioner.

(3b.4a) or “sleep” (4a) but is constantly present as “your shade at your right hand” (5b)⁽³³⁾ and consequently can protect the petitioner from all kinds of peril (cf. “sun” [6a] and “moon” [6b]⁽³⁴⁾; “all evil” [7a] and “your coming and going” [8ab]). YHWH’s presence surpasses the constraints of time (“now and for evermore” 8b) and space (“heaven and earth” 2b) therefore he can assist the petitioner in his journey from negative to positive space. The poem contains the first hint that the petitioner is moving from private to public space when he refers to YHWH’s protection of “Israel” (4b).

Psalms 122 abounds with terminology that suggests the concept of “arrival”. As in Psalm 120 concrete, physical space is mentioned. Now, however, the physical space is positive. The petitioner has arrived in Jerusalem⁽³⁵⁾. The petitioner is now at-centre, in the presence of Yahweh. And Jerusalem has important “symbolic” connotations. It is a symbol of religious and political authority. 1ab is still suggestive of the journey. The petitioner states: “I rejoiced with those who told me: ‘Let’s go to the house of YHWH’”. Significantly there is a movement from first person singular to first person plural in 1ab. The journey from positive to negative space is also a journey from private space to public space⁽³⁶⁾. And now they have arrived at their destination. They are standing “in your gates, Jerusalem” (2a). Jerusalem is the ultimate destination of “the tribes of Yah” (4a)⁽³⁷⁾; their ultimate goal is “to praise the name of YHWH” (4b). In Jerusalem they are confronted by the symbols of YHWH’s presence, the “thrones of judgement, the thrones of the house of David” (5ab). The reference to the “house of David” emphasises the symbolic value of David, at once historical king and representative of the Messiah to come⁽³⁸⁾. The sense of

⁽³³⁾ YHWH thus differs from the vegetation gods of the cultivated land who die at the change of the seasons (KRAUS, *Psalms*, 429).

⁽³⁴⁾ In the Ancient Near East both “sun” and “moon” function as gods and can cause humans harm (cf. DE LIAGRE BÖHL – GEMSER, *Psalmen*, 175).

⁽³⁵⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 113 suggests that the exact context might well be the three pilgrimage festivals of Passover, Weeks and Tabernacles or *Sukkoth* (cf. Exod 23,14-17; 34,18-24; Lev 23,4-44; Deut 16,1-17).

⁽³⁶⁾ KRAUS, *Psalms*, 43; J. TEICHMAN, “Psalm 122. Erwünscht den Frieden Jerusalems”, *Aus den Psalmen leben. Das gemeinsame Gebet von Kirche und Synagoge neu erschlossen* (Hrsg. W. STROLZ) (Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1979) 204.

⁽³⁷⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 113 remarks: “*The tribes of Yah* would well describe those in attendance at the feasts, for every male Israelite was required to attend (Exod 34,23; Deut 16,16)”.

⁽³⁸⁾ TEICHMAN, “Psalm 122”, 205.

belonging, of being at-centre, explains the urgent prayer for the “peace of Jerusalem” (6ab). Only when peace is experienced by “those who love you” (6b), when it is present “within your walls” (7a) and “within your citadels” (7b) can the petitioner and his “brothers and friends” (8a) experience true communion with Yahweh. Only then will their exile be over, their journey fruitful, their destiny positive.

Psalms 120–122 describe a journey (Psalm 121) from negative space (Psalm 120) towards positive space (Psalm 122), an ascending movement from the depths of despair and exile to the joyous arrival in Jerusalem. There is a contrast between the unbearable experience of being alone in exile (Psalm 120) and the joyful experience of being at home in the presence of YHWH and companions in Jerusalem (Psalm 122).

Psalm 123 picks up the theme of Psalm 120, but takes it a step further. The poet, now spokesperson for a first person plural narrator, experiences the “contempt” (3b, 5c) and “ridicule” of the “proud” and “arrogant” (4). The emphasis falls on the emotional experience of being in negative public (lived) space, the target of the contempt and ridicule of their enemies, locked in negative circumstances. Once again their only hope is in the possibility that the divine and human world can interact to their benefit. They urgently call upon Yahweh’s “mercy” (2d, 3a). But they do it with full confidence, lifting their “eyes” to Yahweh (1a)⁽³⁹⁾ who is “enthroned in heaven” (1a)⁽⁴⁰⁾. Thus they have ascended above the level of geographical Jerusalem, to Yahweh in heaven. In Psalm 121 the petitioner lifts his eyes to the mountains (121,1a), but above the mountains, enthroned in heaven, is YHWH who protects Israel (121,4b). As the “eyes of servants” (2a) and the “eyes of a maid” (2b) are expectantly raised towards their owners (2ab), so their eyes are “upon Yahweh our God” (2c) until he “shows us mercy” (2d). The expectation of heavenly intervention (1b) lifts the poet from his experience of being off-centre into the divine sphere.

This is stated pointedly in Psalm 124. Israel herself is now the spokesperson (1b). She confesses: “If it was not Yahweh who was on our side” (1a, 2a) when “men attacked us” (2b), all would have been

⁽³⁹⁾ A gesture of yearning and longing (KRAUS, *Psalms*, 437; TERRIEN, *Psalms*, 818), but also of dependency (DE LIAGRE BÖHL – GEMSER, *Psalmen*, 177).

⁽⁴⁰⁾ YHWH’s majesty transcends the confines of “this” world (KRAUS, *Psalms*, 437; MITCHELL, *Message*, 119).

lost. And “all” is described in mythological terms as being “swallowed alive” (3a), “engulfed by water” (4a), “swept over by a torrent” (4b) and by “raging waters” (5b). These images are symbols of the power of death, destruction, indeed of *שׂוּל* itself⁽⁴¹⁾. Were it not for YHWH enthroned in heaven (123,1) the petitioners would have descended into the depths of *שׂוּל*. But praise Yahweh (6a)! He “did not give us as prey to their teeth” (6b). His presence made “escape” (7c) from death and destruction possible, as a bird who has escaped from the “fowlers’ snare” (7a)⁽⁴²⁾. The poem ends with exactly the same words as in Psalm 121,2ab. Help comes from Yahweh (8a) because his presence brings about the meeting of heaven and earth. And as in Psalm 121 the latter half of the poem suggests movement. Space is depicted in dynamic terms: They are “like a bird escaping from the fowlers’ snare” (7a); but “the snare has been broken” (7b) “and we have escaped” (7c). This time, however, the journey is not merely from exile to Jerusalem, but from death to life, from *שׂוּל* to *שָׁמַיִם*!

Psalm 125 is parallel to Psalm 122 in the sense that “Jerusalem” is explicitly mentioned. But here “Mount Zion” (1b) or “Jerusalem” (2a) is an abstract, imagined entity, the symbol of the presence and protection of YHWH (2b)⁽⁴³⁾. Those who “trust in Yahweh” (1a) can experience the physical and emotional security of his presence. It transcends time (2c) because YHWH “surrounds his people” (2b). The first half of Psalm 125 thus describes abstract, positive public space. In the second half of the poem the emphasis moves towards the physical, imagined and lived space of those who trust him, of his people. They are under the hegemony of the “wicked” (3a). However, YHWH’s protective presence provides the assurance that “the sceptre of the wicked will not remain on the land allotted to the righteous” (3ab). This would be a ghastly scenario, because there would be real danger that “the righteous stretch out their hands in evil” (3c). This possibility explains the urgent prayer that YHWH “do good” (4a) to “those who are good” (4a) and “upright in their heart” (4b) but “banish” (5b) “those who turn to crooked ways” (5a) “together with the evildoers” (5b). The poem ends with the prayer: “Peace be upon

⁽⁴¹⁾ KRAUS, *Psalms*, 441; GOULDER, *Psalms of the return*, 54; HUNTER, *Psalms*, 201.

⁽⁴²⁾ HUNTER, *Psalms*, 201 points to parallel expressions in Prov 1,8-19 and sees in the contrast between flight into the air and descent into the waters a merism symbolising life and death.

⁽⁴³⁾ HUNTER, *Psalms*, 205.

Israel" (5c). It picks up the theme of Psalm 121,4b. YHWH protects Israel. Only he can grant her peace.

Psalms 123–125 echo the spatial orientation of Psalms 120–122, but interpret it on an abstract and emotional level. In Psalms 120–122 the movement was upwards. Here the starting point is YHWH who is enthroned in heaven (Psalm 123). He alone prevents Israel from plunging into the depths of שאול (Psalm 124). His protective presence, symbolised by Mount Zion and Jerusalem (Psalm 125), ensures the survival of his people in the midst of negative imagined and lived space, the experience of being off-centre, the target of proud and arrogant people.

Spatially a very interesting pattern is discernible in Pss 126–128. Structurally these three poems reflect exactly what is said in Ps 125,1–2: YHWH surrounds his people! Psalm 126 commences in the public, dynamic domain. Once Israel experienced the joy of a change in "the fortune of Zion" (1a)⁽⁴⁴⁾. With their own eyes they saw, with their own bodies they experienced the meeting of the divine and human plane, the intervention of Yahweh on their behalf, the change from being far, off-centre, exposed to being near, at-centre, protected, the reality of coming home after being in exile⁽⁴⁵⁾. It was a cause of great joy (2a) to those who experienced it and awe amongst the nations (2b). The second half of the psalm contains the urgent plea that Yahweh again should intervene on their behalf (4a) and change their fortunes completely (4b). The explicit mentioning of negative physical space (the dry wadis in the Negeb in 4b) that can miraculously change to "streams" (4b) enhances the plea, but also hints at the possibility of divine intervention⁽⁴⁶⁾. In 5a–6c there is a movement from the public sphere to private space⁽⁴⁷⁾. These verses contain the metaphor of sowing and reaping, first stated generally and in the plural (5ab), then particularly and in the singular (6abc): sowing with tears leads to reaping with joy. On the one hand it emphasises the possibility of YHWH's intervention and a complete change in their destiny. On the

⁽⁴⁴⁾ "Zion" in this context does not refer only to the physical space (the city), but also to the people inhabiting it, the returnees from exile (cf. KRAUS, *Psalms*, 449).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ DE LIAGRE BÖHL – GEMSER, *Psalmen*, 181.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ KRAUS, *Psalms*, 450. HUNTER, *Psalms*, 207 emphasises the contrast between the negative connotations attached to the chaotic waters mentioned in Ps 124,4–5 and the positive connotations when YHWH provides life-giving water.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ TERRIEN, *Psalms*, 827.

other hand it comforts those locked in negative space. The joy of reaping inevitably follows the hardship of sowing. Those who are off-centre now, will once again be at-centre⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Psalms 127 is concerned with the private efforts of building a house (1ab), working (2abc), and enjoying family life (3a-5d)⁽⁴⁹⁾. The normal day-to-day activities of individuals can be experienced as positive or negative, off-centre or at-centre. It depends on the involvement of the divine sphere in the normal routine on the human plane. If Yahweh is involved (1a, 1c), these (sometimes) mundane tasks become a source of great joy (5a), personal fulfilment (5b), and public vindication (5cd). Jerusalem and Israel are not mentioned once, public space is reserved to the protection of "the city" (1c) and dealing with "enemies in the gate" (5d). The emphasis is on the private life of the individual, the involvement of YHWH in his life, and its effect in dealing with the community.

Psalms 128 continues in similar vein. The first half of the poem concentrates entirely upon the private space, the "house" of an individual⁽⁵⁰⁾. Happiness resides in Yahweh's involvement in the day-to-day activities of individuals. Those who "fear Yahweh" (1a) and "walk in his ways" (1b) are "happy" (1a). They will enjoy the "fruit" of their "labour" (2a) in the company of a loving "wife" (3a) and strapping "sons" (3b). However, the second half of the poem is concerned with public space. The source of this kind of blessing upon individuals resides in "Zion" (5a) and "Jerusalem" (5b). Therefore the

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Many commentators refer to the possible Canaanite background of the metaphor. At the time of sowing a ritual morning took place, symbolising the death of the fertility god. Similarly great joy accompanied the harvest period, symbolising the rising of the god from the clutches of מות and שׂוֹאֵל (cf. the discussion in KRAUS, *Psalms*, 450-451; HUNTER, *Psalms*, 207-208). DE LIAGRE BÖHL – GEMSER, *Psalmen*, 181 indicate that the metaphor also occurs in Ps 85. In both poems it has a historical basis (the concrete experience of being in danger) and expresses the eschatological hope that salvation will become a reality.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ KRAUS, *Psalms*, 455. The image of building a house (127,1a) and the protection of a city (127,1c) by YHWH himself does, of course, call to mind the temple and Jerusalem (cf. TH. BOOIJ, "Psalm 127,2b: a return to Martin Luther", *Bib* 81 (2000) 265. HUNTER, *Psalms*, 211 points to parallel expressions in 2 Sam 7,11b-16//1 Chr 17,10b-14. This similarity in theme might be the reason why Ps 127 is attributed to Solomon in its superscript (cf. also TERRIEN, *Psalms*, 829).

⁽⁵⁰⁾ As in Ps 127 these "private" scenes are couched in metaphoric language that is elsewhere applied to the relationship between Israel and YHWH. In Hos 14,4-7 the vine and the olive are paired as in 128,3 to describe Israel restored through the merciful love of God. The vine is frequently used as metaphor for Israel (Ps 80,8-18; Ezek 17,1-10) (cf. HUNTER, *Psalms*, 213).

prayer: "May YHWH bless you from Zion" (5a). Only he can grant "prosperity" (5b) and a long life (6a). The poem ends with the same exclamation as in Ps 125,5c: "Peace be upon Israel" (6b). Psalm 128 ends where Psalm 126 started: in public space, with YHWH as the only source of blessing and prosperity, both for his people at large and for each of its individual members.

The third triad of poems describe the experiences of individuals going about their daily business of sowing and reaping (Psalm 126), working and raising families (Psalm 127), and expecting the fruit of their labour (Psalm 128). This experience and expectation is set in the context of the trials and tribulations of Zion (Psalm 126,1-3; Psalm 128,5-6). These three poems describe a life at-centre, in the presence of Yahweh. It is emphasised by the chiasmic relationship between Psalm 126 and 128. The poems illustrate the truth expressed in Ps 125,1-2 – YHWH surrounds his people!

Psalm 129 picks up the theme of Psalm 125, emphasised by the fact that these are the only poems in the collection where the roots רשע (125,3a; 129,4b) and צדק (125,3bc; 129,4a) occur. The focus moves to public space. The poem describes the physical experience of Israel during the course of her history, an experience of being "oppressed" (1a, 2a). For far too long Israel has been the victim of scorn and humiliation, metaphorically described in agricultural terms in 3ab: "Upon my back ploughmen have ploughed, they have made their furrows long". However, the presence of Yahweh prevented the utter destruction of the people (4ab). Therefore the petitioner can implore Yahweh to put those "who hate Zion" (5b) to "shame" (5a)⁽⁵¹⁾. It is his prayer that such people should never experience the blessing of Yahweh (8abc)⁽⁵²⁾.

Psalm 130 turns to the emotional experience of being estranged from Yahweh. It amounts to no less than being in the "depths", in the clutches of שאול (1a)⁽⁵³⁾. Psalm 130 plunges into the Depth, a theme also present in Psalm 124⁽⁵⁴⁾. The experience of being off-centre, far

⁽⁵¹⁾ HUNTER, *Psalms*, 217 points to the contrast between vv. 4ab and 5ab. "YHWH is righteous" (4a) stands in contrast to "all who hate Zion" (5b) and YHWH's positive action towards the righteous "he cuts the cords of the wicked" (4b) in contrast to the wish "may they be turned back in shame" (5a).

⁽⁵²⁾ HUNTER, *Psalms*, 216 emphasises the agricultural background of this psalm. He emphasises that the closing blessing in verse 8abc should be understood as a blessing exchanged between two parties such as described in Ru 2,4.

⁽⁵³⁾ KRAUS, *Psalms*, 467; HUNTER, *Psalms*, 218; ZENGER, "Zion als Ort", 107.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 122.

from Yahweh, estranged and unprotected, lies in the devastating influence of sin. But because Yahweh does not keep “a record of sins” (3a) there is hope for the individual petitioner (5ab, 6ab) and indeed for Israel at large (7abc, 8ab)⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Psalms 131 describes the effect of reconciliation with Yahweh⁽⁵⁶⁾. It brings contentment, “like a weaned child with its mother” (2abc). Yahweh is and remains Israel’s only source of hope (3a) because he alone can transcend the constraints of time (3b). Significantly the poem picks up important themes from Psalm 123. There the poet lifted his eyes to YHWH enthroned in heaven (123,1ab). Here his “eyes are not haughty” (131,1a)! There he prayed for mercy because he was the target of contempt and ridicule (123,3-4). Here he does not “dwell upon great matters, things too wonderful” for him (131,1b) but has “stilled and quieted” his “innermost being” (131,2a). He has found complete contentedness in the presence of YHWH.

As in Psalms 123–125 the main focus in Psalms 129–131 is on abstract space. The experience of oppression (Psalm 129) is nothing short of residing in the realm of death (Psalm 130). The only escape lies in the mercy of Yahweh (Psalm 130) who grants a sinner tranquillity and security (Psalm 131).

Psalms 132 contains a vivid description of the importance of Jerusalem/Zion both as a concrete, physical space and as a symbol. It is by far the longest of the Songs of Ascents; it alone suggests that a climax has been reached. It has many connections with Psalm 122, emphasising the importance of Jerusalem as a centre for pilgrimage (6a-7b) containing the symbols of political (12) and religious (13) authority⁽⁵⁷⁾. On the one hand Psalm 132 calls the past to mind (132,1-10): the psalm commences with an urgent call that Yahweh should remember David (1ab) and his oath to Yahweh (2ab) namely that he will not rest (3a-4b) until he has found “a place for Yahweh” (5a), “a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob” (5b). The psalmist urgently prays that YHWH should once again do what he did in the time of David (8ab) and restore the importance of the city. Only at “his dwelling place” (7a), at “his footstool” (7b) can his people experience

⁽⁵⁵⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 123. Cf. also G.T.M. PRINSLOO, “Psalm 130: Poetic patterns and social significance”, *OTE* 15 (2002) 462-464.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 123 remarks that it is Israel’s experience of forgiveness (cf. Ps 130) that leads to a spiritual state of tranquillity and humble contentment in Ps 131.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ KRAUS, *Psalms*, 475.

peace and tranquillity. As in Psalm 120, this psalm contains a reference to two specific geographical regions, namely "Ephrata" (6a) and "the fields of Jaar" (6b). It calls to mind the experiences of David. Coming from "Ephrata" (Bethlehem) he heard that the ark, captured by the Philistines, was located in Kiriath-Jearim (1 Sam 7,1; 2 Sam 6,2) and sets about to recapture it and bring it back to Jerusalem (cf. 8ab). There "righteousness" reigns (9a) and his "saints" can "sing for joy" (9b), for David's sake Yahweh should not reject his "anointed one" (10ab). On the other hand the poem points to the (eschatological) future (132,11-18)⁽⁵⁸⁾. YHWH is called upon to remember his promise to David (11a) that one of his descendants will sit on his throne "for ever and ever" (12b). "Zion" (13a) is Yahweh's special "dwelling" (13b), his "resting place for ever and ever" (14a). From Jerusalem, depicted here as centre of the universe, Yahweh's blessings will flow to his people (15a-17b) but his enemies will be put to shame (18a). The end of the psalm is decidedly Messianic⁽⁵⁹⁾. When YHWH's eternal presence is restored in Zion the Davidic (Messianic) king can rule in peace.

Psalm 133 continues this train of thought. Where brothers live together in unity (1ab) Yahweh's blessing flows to the furthest boundaries of existence. Two similes emphasise the point: Like oil flowing from the head of Aaron to the hem of his garment (2abc)⁽⁶⁰⁾, like dew flowing from Mount Hermon in the northern extremities of Israel's territory to become a blessing on Mount Zion (3a), Yahweh will bless his people with everlasting life (3bc)⁽⁶¹⁾. Harmony between brothers creates positive abstract space, an atmosphere conducive to the experience of Yahweh's presence and blessing. Harmony with the

⁽⁵⁸⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 123.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ WILLIAMS, *Psalms*, 450; MITCHELL, *Message*, 124-125; HUNTER, *Psalms*, 225.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ J.L. MAYS, "There the blessing: An exposition of Psalm 133", *A God so near. Essays on Old Testament Theology in honor of Patrick D. Miller* (Eds. B.A. STRAWN – N.R. BOWEN) (Winona Lake 2003) 83-85 indicates that the similes belong to the sphere of wisdom, the first specifically in the context of the rituals between host and guest. Reference to Aaron and Mount Zion places the poem in a broader communal (cultic) context (cf. TH. BOOU, "Psalm 133: 'Behold, how good and how pleasant'", *Bib* 83 (2002) 265.

⁽⁶¹⁾ MAYS, "Psalm 133", 86 sees parallels between the closing line of Psalm 133 and Deuteronomy's insistence that life is related to obedience to the commandments of God. MITCHELL, *Message*, 124 argues that the metaphors contain a prayer for a united northern and southern kingdom. BOOU, "Psalm 133", 260-266 doubts this interpretation and applies it to the gathering of those who worship their God in Zion".

brother and Yahweh leads to a real experience of being at-centre. Psalm 133 in many respects picks up the themes of Psalm 121, but in antithetical manner. In 121 the poet ascends to Jerusalem in the midst of danger, expecting the protection of YHWH. In 133 the blessing of YHWH descends upon his people living in harmony⁽⁶²⁾.

The final poem in the collection (Psalm 134) contains the most vivid description of being at-centre, in the presence of Yahweh, in positive concrete and abstract space. The “servants of Yahweh” (1b) who stand “at night” in his “house” (1c) can “praise” him (1a) and conversely experience his blessing “from Zion” (3a)⁽⁶³⁾. The poem stands in stark contrast to the complete negative tone of Psalm 120. Space has been recreated through the physical experience of ascending to Jerusalem and the emotional experience of ascending to YHWH from negative to positive space, from off-centre to at-centre. The “servants of YHWH” learned an important lesson: “...dass der segnende Gott, allen sozialen und politischen Widerwärtigkeiten zum Trotz, mitten unter ihnen da ist und auf der Seite der Seinen steht”⁽⁶⁴⁾.

The last triad of poems focuses on concrete space. Jerusalem is YHWH’s dwelling place (Psalm 132) from where he blesses his people living in harmony (Psalm 133) in order for them to constantly sing his praise (Psalm 134). Jerusalem is the ultimate destiny of those who struggle under oppression and are in exile (Psalm 120).

2. The concept of “space” and the “story” of the שירי המעלות

The שירי המעלות tells a (spatial) story with a sad beginning (Ps 120) and a happy ending (Ps 134), a story of suffering, ridicule and contempt, but also of happiness, prosperity and contentment.

The story begins in distress and despair, containing the haunting cry for salvation of an exile living amongst people of lying lips and a deceitful tongue (Ps 120). The petitioner then ascends from his despair and moves towards a new destination, fully aware of the protective presence of YHWH (Ps 121). He reaches his destination — Jerusalem/Zion. There, amongst the symbols of political and religious

⁽⁶²⁾ MITCHELL, *Message*, 124; HUNTER, *Psalms*, 227.

⁽⁶³⁾ ZENGER, *Morgenröte*, 141-144 indicates that the cultic situation of the little poem might well be the blessing of the people at the closing festivities of a pilgrimage festival. The priests are blessing them before they depart for home. The poem contains allusions to the priestly blessing in Num 6,24-26 (cf. also SEYBOLD, *Psalmen*, 501; MITCHELL, *Message*, 124).

⁽⁶⁴⁾ ZENGER, *Morgenröte*, 143; cf. also HUNTER, *Psalms*, 228.

authority, he finds peace (Ps 122). Psalm 123 makes it clear that the danger is not yet averted. Still the petitioners experience contempt and ridicule. Therefore they symbolically ascend to heaven in complete confidence that YHWH will have mercy upon them. Psalm 124 emphasises the point that Israel would have plunged into the depths of שאול had it not been for the saving presence of YHWH. That saving presence is like the mountains surrounding Jerusalem. YHWH surrounds his people (Ps 125).

Psalms 126–128 emphasises the saving presence of YHWH both in form and in content. Formally the three poems form an inclusion, with the saving acts of YHWH originating in Zion forming the protective “arms” around the small individual performing his mundane tasks of sowing and reaping, building a house and raising a family. In a sense these three poems form the heart of the collection.

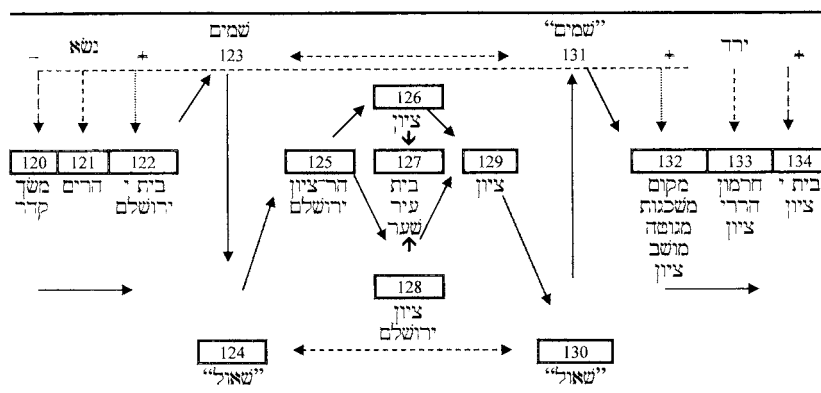
Psalm 129 picks up the theme of Psalm 125. But for the protective presence of YHWH, Israel would have been annihilated by wicked people. But YHWH is righteous; he cuts the cord of the wicked. As in Psalm 124, the poet plunges into the depths of שאול in Psalm 130. Sin causes a total breakdown in his relationship with YHWH. That relationship can only be restored because of YHWH’s willingness to forgive. Only then can the poet find complete contentment in the arms of YHWH (Ps 131).

Psalms 132–134 are similar to the opening triad. Psalm 132 emphasises the importance of Jerusalem as cultic and political centre (cf. Ps 122), the focal point of Israel’s hopes and aspirations. From Jerusalem brothers living together in harmony can expect YHWH’s blessing (Ps 133) and constantly live in his presence (Ps 134). The positive space of Psalm 134 stands in stark contrast to the negative space of Psalm 120. The circle has been completed. A real pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the temple became a spiritual pilgrimage from שמים וטשאול, an ascent into the arms of YHWH⁽⁶⁵⁾.

The spatial “map” of the שירי המעלות can thus be plotted as follows:

⁽⁶⁵⁾ WILLI, “Das שיר המעלות”, 157 points to the fact that the Songs of Ascents move from the fringes of Palestine (Ps 120,5) through the Negeb (Ps 126,4) and Ephrata (Ps 132,6) to Hermon far in the north (Ps 133,3) but always within the context of the centrality of Zion.

THE SPATIAL STORY LINE OF PSALMS 120–134



3. The ideology of space in Psalms 120–134

The discussion above traced the spatial story line of Psalms 120–134. It has largely been a “mapping” of physical (“firstspace”) and imagined (“secondspace”) space in these poems. Aspects of “thirdspace” still need attention. What ideology is discernable in the description of space in the *שירי המעלות*? Who is speaking to whom? When are they speaking? There are no clearcut answers, but there are a number of important hints when the poems are regarded as a unity in the context of Book V of the Psalter.

The self-presentation of the poet (s) is the first hint. Almost every poem in the collection speaks of hardship, enmity, and suffering. The poet is “in distress” (120,1), at the mercy of “lying lips” and a “deceitful tongue” (120,2), amongst “those who hate peace” (120,6). He is in peril (121), endures the “contempt” (123,3) of the “proud” and “arrogant” (123,4). He fully identifies with the calamities experienced by Israel (124) and prays for her protection (125). He remembers her salvation with joy (126) and expects blessing from Zion (128). He experiences suffering together with his people (129) and prays for her forgiveness (130). He finds peace in the arms of YHWH (131), knowing that blessing can come only from one source, the political and religious authority bestowed upon Jerusalem and the Davidic (Messianic) dynasty (132). He expects blessing only when “brothers live together in unity” (133) and finds fulfilment in the temple (134). He identifies with those who are “peace-loving” (120,7), rejoices in a pilgrimage to the “house of YHWH” (122,1) and regards himself as a

member of the “tribes of Yah” (122,4). His eyes are expectantly upon YHWH as the “eyes of servants” and the “eyes of a maid” upon their owners (123,2). He identifies with those who “trust in YHWH” (125,1). He is one of the “righteous” (125,3), one of those “who are good” and “upright in their heart” (125,4). He “fears YHWH” (128,4). His “heart is not proud” nor his “eyes haughty” (131,1). He is one of the “poor” who expects “food” from YHWH (132,15), one of the “saints” of Jerusalem who will “ever sing for joy” (132,16). In short, he is one of the “servants of YHWH” (134,1).

A second hint is the preoccupation of the poet (s) with two kinds of space⁽⁶⁶⁾. On the one hand the focus is upon Jerusalem/Zion/the house of Yahweh (cf. 122,1.2.3.9; 125,1.2; 126,1; 128,5; 129,5; 132,5.7.8.13.14; 133,3; 134,1-3)⁽⁶⁷⁾. Linked to that is the focus on Israel as the people that belong to Yahweh and in Jerusalem in a very special sense (121,4; 122,4; 124,4; 125,5; 128,6; 129,1; 130,7.8; 131,3). A third characteristic is the explicit mentioning of David, either in the superscript to the psalms (122,1; 124,1; 127,1; 131,1; 133,1) or in the case of Psalms 122 and 132 in the poem itself (122,5; 132,1.10.11.17)⁽⁶⁸⁾. Thus the poems are concerned with Israel as a political and religious entity whose true destination is to be found in Jerusalem, the centre of political and religious authority, the centre of the universe.

On the other hand the poems describe private space⁽⁶⁹⁾. It ranges from extremely negative, an experience of being in exile (120), to extremely positive, an experience of being safe in the arms of YHWH (131). Noteworthy is the focus on private space in the heart of the collection (126–128). There, surrounded by the protective arms of YHWH, the “little people” find pleasure in going about their daily business of sowing and reaping (126), building houses and raising families (127) and enjoying the fruit of their labour (128), expecting deliverance and the coming of the new David and the Messianic kingdom (132).

None of these terms are innocent. Scholars working in the field of the redaction of the Psalter have shown that Book V is “concerned with the restoration of Israel after the exile and has a distinctly

⁽⁶⁶⁾ ZENGER, “Zion als Ort”, 110-111.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ GOULDER, *Psalms of the return*, 112; HUNTER, *Psalms*, 229.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ DE LIAGRE BÖHL – GEMSER, *Psalmen*, 172.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ HUNTER, *Psalms*, 230 remarks that the focus on the “domestic realm of family and farm” is “scarcely paralleled elsewhere in the Psalter”.

eschatological and Messianic flavour”⁽⁷⁰⁾. The שירי המעלות in particular existed as a collection prior to the final redaction of Book V⁽⁷¹⁾. In this context a group of people calling themselves the “servants”⁽⁷²⁾, the “poor”⁽⁷³⁾, people who “fear YHWH”⁽⁷⁴⁾, YHWH’s “saints”⁽⁷⁵⁾ are met several times throughout Book V. They have a distinct interest in Zion⁽⁷⁶⁾/Jerusalem⁽⁷⁷⁾/the house of YHWH⁽⁷⁸⁾. This “servants of the Lord” who describe themselves as “poor” and display a distinct interest in “Zion” indicate a “Motivkonstellation”⁽⁷⁹⁾ that occurs only in the Book of Isaiah⁽⁸⁰⁾ and the Psalms⁽⁸¹⁾. They have been identified as a group of Levites who has been expelled from their privileged position in the temple by the post-exilic temple aristocracy⁽⁸²⁾ late in the Persian period (beginning 4th century BCE)⁽⁸³⁾. The presence of these terms in the שירי המעלות indicates that these are the songs of a political and religious marginalised community, under constant pressure, not from enemies from outside, but from the aristocracy in Jerusalem. They

⁽⁷⁰⁾ G.T.M. PRINSLOO, “A contextual and intertextual reading of Psalm 118”, *OTE* 16 (2003) 412.

⁽⁷¹⁾ E. ZENGER, *Ich will die Morgenröte wecken*. Psalmenauslegungen (Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1991) 128.

⁽⁷²⁾ עבדים, cf. Pss 113,1; 134,1; 135,1. With suffixes referring to YHWH the term עבד occurs in Ps 135,9.14.

⁽⁷³⁾ אביון, cf. Pss 107,41; 109,16.22.31; 112,9; 113,7; 132,15; 140,13.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ ירא, cf. Pss 115,11.13; 118,4; 135,20.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ חסד, cf. Pss 106,1.7.45; 107,1.8.15.21.31.43; 108,5; 109,12.16.21.26; 115,1; 116,15; 117,2; 118,1-4 (4x).29; 119,41.64.76.88.124.149.159; 130,7; 132,9.16; 136,1-26 (26x); 138,2.8; 143,8.12; 144,2; 145,5.8.10.17; 147,11; 148,14; 149,1.5.9.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ שֵׁן, cf. Pss 125,1; 126,1; 129,5; 133,3; 137,1.3; 146,10; 147,12; 149,2.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ ירושלים, cf. Pss 116,19; 122,2.3.6; 125,2; 128,5; 135,21; 137,5.6.7; 147,2.12.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ בית ידוה, cf. Pss 116,19; 122,1.9; 134,1; 135,2.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Cf. U. BERGES, “Die Knechte im Psalter. Ein Beitrag zu seiner Kompositionsgeschichte”, *Bib* 81 (2000) 153.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ עבדים occurs once in Deutero-Isaiah (Is 54,17), but becomes one of the central themes in Trito-Isaiah (Is 65,8 (3X).9.13.14.15; 66,14). W.A.M. BEUKEN, “The main theme of Trito-Isaiah ‘the servants of YHWH’”, *JSOT* 47 (1990) 67 regards them as the “offspring” of the Servant of YHWH mentioned in Is 53,10.

⁽⁸¹⁾ WILLI, “Das שיר המעלות”, 154 emphasises that Zion occurs with regularity only in Isaiah, Zachariah, Micah and the Psalms. In the Psalms it is only in the Songs of Ascents that it can be regarded as a “*Leitmotiv*”.

⁽⁸²⁾ BERGES, “Die Knechte im Psalter”, 153-178; J. BLENKINSOPP, “The ‘servants of the Lord’ in third Isaiah. Profile of a pietistic group in the Persian period”, *PIBA* 7 (1983) 5; J. BLENKINSOPP, “A Jewish sect of the Persian period”, *CBQ* 52 (1990) 10.

⁽⁸³⁾ ZENGER, *Morgenröte*, 128.

experience their plight as a new exile and long for the eschatological intervention of YHWH⁽⁸⁴⁾. Their voice is heard in the שירי המעלות as they visit Jerusalem and find consolation in the fact that, even though they are exiles in their own country, they are safe in the protective arms of YHWH who will never forsake his true people. Concentrating on the concept of “space” in these songs, the fortitude of the singers can only be admired. These are indeed songs of “... Hoffnung inmitten eines harten und verzweifelten Alltags”⁽⁸⁵⁾.

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This study does not claim to have discovered “the” structure or “the” meaning of the שירי המעלות. However, it has shown that the concept of “space” plays an important role in every single poem in the collection. By mapping “space” and relating it to the content of the poems in the context of Book V of the Psalter, the “story” of these poems can be discerned. It is a meaningful story with a sad beginning but a happy end. The happy end resides especially in the expectation that YHWH “ascends” with his people towards the eschatological and Messianic future. The study indicates that research into aspects of the “story” told in the Book of Psalms if it is read as a meaningful unity might prove fruitful and will contribute towards our understanding of the intentions and ideologies of its author-redactor (s).

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SUMMARY

This study reads the Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120–134) from the perspective of the concept of “space” and argues that they form as a single, interrelated unit that tells a meaningful “story”. By applying the principles of “critical spatiality” the spatial orientation of each poem is analysed. The conclusion is reached that the poems can be grouped together in five triads of three poems each. By mapping “space” and relating it to the content of the poems in the context of Book V of the Psalter, the “story” of these poems can be discerned. It is a meaningful story with a sad beginning but a happy end. The happy end resides especially in the expectation that YHWH “ascends” with his people towards the eschatological and Messianic future.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ WILLI, “Das שיר המעלות”, 157.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ ZENGER, *Morgenröte*, 129.

Where Should One Look for Gideon's Ophra? ⁽¹⁾

The location of the biblical city of Ophra (עפרה) is still unknown, with only very few hints as to its whereabouts found in the Bible⁽²⁾. In addition to what exists in the Book of Judges, information in Josh 18,23 and 1 Sam 13,17 may prove to be of some use. In the Book of Joshua (18,23) a city of the same name was listed along with other cities of Benjamin; situated some 7 kilometres north-west of Tell Beitin, this city has often been identified with modern et-Taiyibeh, and may well be the place referred to in 1 Sam 13,17, which points to the movement of Philistine military troops from Michmash to Beth-horon⁽³⁾.

Older literature on the subject identifies a place in the lot of Benjamin (presumably modern et-Taiyibeh) with that referred to in Judges 6⁽⁴⁾. However, the current scholarly consensus is that we are in fact dealing with two distinct places.

1. *Status quaestionis*

It has often been acknowledged that Ophra — a city of considerable importance in the story of Gideon — was situated in the Jezreel valley, between Megiddo and Mount Tabor. This theory springs from the belief that the city must have been located inside the territory of Manasseh; a presupposition derived exclusively from the biblical passages linking Gideon with the tribe (Judg 6,15). Any subsequent quest to locate Gideon's city should therefore be a straightforward one, especially given that — thanks to the ostraca from Samaria — the

⁽¹⁾ The earlier form of this article was presented at The Society of Biblical Literature – International Meeting, Cambridge (UK), July 20-25, 2003. I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Ernest Axel Knauf for his kind remarks on the text. I would also like to thank Victor Johnson and Klaudyna Hildebrandt for refining the original English version of this paper.

⁽²⁾ J. SIMONS, *The Geographical and Topographical Texts of the Old Testament* (Leiden 1959) 291, § 561.

⁽³⁾ F.M. ABEL, *Géographie de la Palestine* (Paris 1933-1938) II, 17; S.R. DRIVER, *Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel* (Oxford ²1960) 102.

⁽⁴⁾ ABEL, *Géographie*, II, 17, 60, 92.

territory of Abiezer is clearly identifiable⁽⁵⁾. In the biblical account, Gideon was described as a descendent of Abiezer (Judg 6,11.24.34; 8,32). It thus seems quite simple to determine which tell, in such a well-defined area, ought to be identified with the city referred to in the Book of Judges.

This basic conformity led many scholars to look for a site that corresponded to the account in Judges within the area of the tribe of Manasseh, thus prompting the hypothesis that identifies Gideon's Ophra with modern 'Affuleh in the Jezreel valley⁽⁶⁾. This identification is based on two arguments; one exegetical, which maintains that if Gideon had in fact been living in the North (within the tribe of Manasseh, and moreover within the territory of Abiezer), then one could expect the city only to exist in such an area⁽⁷⁾; the other toponymical, stating that the modern name ought to reflect, in some way, the original name (commonly assumed to be that preserved in MT), in which case the modern name must be derived from the root 'pr. The hypothesis identifying Ophra with 'Affuleh' fits both arguments quite comfortably. The toponymical evaluation would require the prerequisite assumption that the final vowel "r" had been replaced by the vowel "l". Scholars advancing this hypothesis have attempted to give it further force by recalling the site-name 'p-r, listed in the Thut-mose' III inscription⁽⁸⁾. The Egyptian text does not point to any precise area, but does suggest that it was a big, if not important, place, and if, in fact, this city were Gideon's Ophra, it would surely have had to be a centre both big and important.

Nadav Na'aman has proffered another identification⁽⁹⁾. Very much in line with the earlier scholarly consensus, Na'aman based his hypothesis on the idea that Ophra existed within the territory of Abiezer and, having established that Abiezer lay to the south of

⁽⁵⁾ A. LEMAIRE, *Inscriptions Hébraïques* (Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient 9) (Paris 1977) I, 60-61, 65.

⁽⁶⁾ Y. AHARONI, *The Land of the Bible. A Historical Geography* (London 1967) 240-242; Z. KALLAI, *Historical Geography of the Bible* (Jerusalem – Leiden 1986) 422-423; J.M. HAMILTON, "Ophra", *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (= *ABD*) (ed. D.N. FREEDMAN; Doubleday 1992) V, 27-28.

⁽⁷⁾ KALLAI, *Historical Geography*, 422; a similar argument was presented half a century earlier, by J. GARSTANG, *Joshua Judges* (London 1931) 319, who stated that it is: "Silet el Dhahr, six miles nearer Shechem, a situation which seems to satisfy the context".

⁽⁸⁾ KALLAI, *Historical Geography*, 422-423.

⁽⁹⁾ N. NA'AMAN, "Pirathon and Ophrah", *BN* 50 (1989) 11-16.

Shechem, advanced that it was possible to identify Ophra with modern Far'ata⁽¹⁰⁾. This site had been previously — and according to Na'aman incorrectly — identified with the biblical city of Pirathon. Na'aman also advanced a philological argument, stating that the original toponym of the site was indeed Ophratha (*'prth*) — it had merely been metathesized at some earlier point. This would explain the modern form of the site name: *pr'th*.

One can identify a similar method of argumentation in both the above hypotheses, namely that, from the biblical text, one is able to approximately gauge where the site must have been located, and from this point locate the place whose name could be traced back to the form attested in MT.

Such theories demonstrate a few common characteristics; firstly, the acceptance of the biblical topography and geographical details, where the location of Ophra within Manasseh and Abiezer is taken for granted; secondly, the main criterion used to examine the theory is its conformity to the biblical account. Here, one must look for the site in the area suggested by the book of Judges, and the site must fit the description transmitted by the Scriptures. This means that the site identified with biblical Ophra would have had to be a big city at a point in time that corresponds to the so-called period of Judges.

Another common feature of a great many hypotheses suggesting the location of the biblical city is the assumption of toponymical persistence. This leads scholars to assume that, in spite of linguistic changes in Palestine, toponyms known from written sources and from different times (and in fact still used today) can be traced back to the form attested in MT. There is also another important assumption in such a methodology, namely the conviction of the toponymical originality in MT. Even if we consider modifying the place name, it is always the form attested in MT which is seen as the closest to the original toponym.

The hypothesis advanced by Ernest Axel Knauf represents a very different point of departure, and suggests that the modern place name, known from biblical material, need not necessarily be connected etymologically with the biblical form. Knauf accepts the possibility that the modern toponym was altered over a long period of time, and therefore no linguistic connection between the current form and that presented in MT can be found. Accordingly, Knauf considers the

⁽¹⁰⁾ Ibid., 15.

option of the biblical Ophra being identified with Jinsâfût⁽¹¹⁾. As a starting point to his hypothesis, he chooses the contemporary names of those cities located within the territory of Abiezer listed in Samaria Ostraca. According to Knauf's theory, from the four toponyms (Fer'ata, Immatin, Burin and Jinsâfût), it is only the latter which lacks a satisfactory etymology in Arabic⁽¹²⁾. Philology was a key element of Knauf's interpretation, as he had been intending to discover the etymology of the modern toponym, i.e., Jinsâfût. The reconstruction assumes the original form of "Canaanite **gan(n) šāpôt*, 'garden of judgment', or **gan(n) (ha-)šôpet*, 'garden of the judge'.." ⁽¹³⁾. For Knauf, the presence of a *šôpet* / *šāpôt* element in the toponym located within the territory of Abiezer is sufficient enough to justify its identification with Ophra. A quite similar methodology was used by Herbert Donner, who advanced the identification of Ophra with Tell Sofar ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Knauf was aware of the importance of archaeological information. However, in its absence, the only remaining criterion was the philological one. He advocates the archaic origins of the site and its name on the basis of a reconstructed toponym, connected to the Canaanite group of languages. If the name had been created for example in Hebrew, it clearly would have predated the domination of Aramaic or Arabic. To summarise, Knauf argues that it would have been quite implausible for the Abiezer clan to have generated a single judge (Gideon or Jerubbaal) from Ophra, together with another from somewhere else. According to Knauf, the original name of modern Jinsâfût suggests that it was connected with the judge or his prerogatives, in which case it is hardly possible for it not to be identical to the biblical Ophra.

The present article aims to propose an alternative location of the biblical Ophra, and is based, moreover, on a very different set of methodological assumptions, the first of which is, most notably, a

⁽¹¹⁾ E.A. KNAUF, "Eglon and Ophrah: Two Toponymic Notes on the Book of Judges", *JSOT* 51 (1991) 25-44, esp. 34-39.

⁽¹²⁾ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

⁽¹³⁾ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁽¹⁴⁾ H. DONNER, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel und seiner Nachbarn in Grundzügen* (GAT 4) (Göttingen 1984) I, 171; see *id.*, "Ophra in Manasse. Der Heimatort des Richters Gideon und des Königs Abimelech", *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte*. Festschrift für Rolf Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag (eds. E. BLUM et al.) (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1990) 193-206, with a list of previous hypotheses.

rejection of the old axiom that Ophra had to be placed within Abiezer, in the territory of Manasseh.

2. *Ophra and Gideon's connections with Abiezer and Manasseh.*

Albert de Pury elaborated the text on Gideon's building of God's altar (Judges 6) in order to determine the various strata of the story. If de Pury's reconstructed text was indeed the original, it is clear that there were no topographical hints. Furthermore, it lacks any information as to the tribal origins of Gideon⁽¹⁵⁾.

As a matter of fact, the only explicit suggestion tying Gideon to the tribe of Manasseh is to be found in Judges 6,15, notwithstanding mention of Gideon's genealogy derived from Joash, son of Abiezer.

Robert Boling considers those sentences linking Gideon to Abiezer (v. 11: "[terebinth] which belonged to Joash of Abiezer"⁽¹⁶⁾; v. 24: "This altar still stands in Ophrah of Abiezer") to be secondary glosses⁽¹⁷⁾.

In the main text of the etiological story of the altar in Ophra, there is only one verse which explicitly points to Gideon's belonging to the tribe of Manasseh: "My clan, you must know, is the weakest in Manasseh and I am the least important in my family" (6,15). In the entire story only two other verses suggest such a genealogy (Judg 6,35 and 7,23). The very presence of the *topos* concerning "the weakest in the tribe and the father's house" ought to make us treat with caution any evaluation of the historical value of this text.

Other biblical passages are of no help in determining whether Gideon, Joash and Abiezer are tied to Manasseh. The only real suggestion is the above-mentioned verse in Judges 6,15. Surprisingly enough, the axiom linking Ophra to Manasseh has a very weak biblical basis. Indeed, those biblical passages offering such a location come

⁽¹⁵⁾ A. DE PURY, "Le raid de Gedeon (Juges 6,25-32) et l'histoire de l'exclusivisme yahviste", *Lectio Difficilior Probabilior? L'exegèse comme expérience de décloisonnement. Mélanges offerts à Françoise Smyth-Florentin* (ed. T. RÖMER) (Heidelberg 1991) 181-182.

⁽¹⁶⁾ J.A. EMERTON, "Gideon and Jerubbaal", *JTS* 27 (1976) 310, paid attention to verse 11, in which, incidentally, it is not Ophra which is being bound to Abiezer, but rather Joash. Cf. W. BLUEDORN, *Yahweh Versus Baalism. A Theological Reading of the Gideon-Abimelech Narrative* (JSOTSS 329) (Sheffield 2001) 72-73.

⁽¹⁷⁾ R.G. BOLING, *Judges*. Introduction, Translation, and Commentary (AB 6A; Garden City, NY 1975) 134.

from the very latest text stratum, and that being the case, there is no objection to looking for another location for Ophra.

First and foremost, one has to closely examine the biblical material, and when attempting to pinpoint the location of Ophra, the key text is without doubt the account concerning Gideon (Judg 6–8). Suffice to say, this is not the appropriate place to discuss all the textual problems arising from an analysis of the story of the building of God's altar in Ophra, nor the relationship between Gideon and Jerubbaal; these problems have been discussed widely enough for us to want to venture into further inquiry. Notwithstanding, the basic problem lies in precisely locating the place thought by biblical authors to have been Gideon's Ophra.

The Hebrew term "Ophra" (עפרה) occurs six times in MT⁽¹⁸⁾, and was rendered in LXX as Εφραθα and on one occasion as Γοφερα (1Sam 13,17). The Greek word Εφραθα was used in LXX not only as the equivalent of Ophra (עפרה), but also of the term "Ephratah" (אֶפְרַתָּה) (Gen 35,16.19; 48,7; Ruth 4,11; Ps (131)132,6; 1 Chr 2,24.50; Mic 5,1). The Greek text of Josh 15,59 in LXX is longer than its Hebrew equivalent in MT, and the name of Εφραθα does not have any Hebrew counterpart. Josh 18,23 in LXX contains the double tradition of rendering this *nomen loci* as Εφραθα and Αφρα. A different tradition can be found in the prophetic text in Obadiah 1,20, where the Greek word Εφραθα was rendered in MT with the *hapax legomenon*: ספֹרד⁽¹⁹⁾, in the *Vulgate*, translated as "Bosfor"⁽²⁰⁾.

This author's hypothesis is that the *nomen loci* "Ophra" (עפרה), as the name of the city where Gideon built God's altar, is an artificial literary creation. There is no such place as Ophra, and never has been, and the city in which the story of Gideon was situated is not to be found in the territory of Manasseh. Had the details of the account been historical, the place of action would have been a big city, with an extensive tower or fortress (מִצְדָּה) enclosed either within, or very near to, city walls. None of the sites found in the area of Manasseh correspond to such a description. The cities in the North, which may well have been thought of as being Ophra, lack the remains of any construction of a military or defensive character. If one is going to look for Gideon's Ophra, he or she should leave the territory of Manasseh and move southwards.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Josh 18,23; Judg 6,11; 8,27.32; 1 Sam 13,17; 1 Chr 4,14.

⁽¹⁹⁾ BDB, 709.

⁽²⁰⁾ Cf. BOLING, *Judges*, 160.

I propose that Gideon's Ophra is in fact Ephratah, which in some instances is identified as Bethlehem⁽²¹⁾.

3. *The place-name: Ophra*

In the Hebrew version of the Bible the difference between the two names is limited to the first radical letter (ayin in "Ophra" – עפרה and aleph in "Ephrata" – אפרתה), although this difference does not present an obstacle to the identification of the two. The verbs 'pr and 'pr are closer to each other than one may think. The name אפרתה possibly derives from the noun אפר, meaning "dust" or "ash(es)"⁽²²⁾. The verb 'pr is not attested in the Bible. The name עפרה is usually derived from the root 'pr II, while the verb 'pr I is a verbum denominativum (attested only in 2 Sam 16,13) – meaning "dusting with dust" – created from the noun עפר – meaning "dry earth", "dust", "debris of ruined city", "earth of the grave"⁽²³⁾. These two verbs seem to be very close in meaning⁽²⁴⁾. Even though we know that in Mishnaic Hebrew the first radical ayin and aleph were able to replace one another, we are not able to determine whether the root 'pr and 'pr were exchangeable.

Let us consider the hypothesis that the toponyms are in close proximity not through any linguistic rule of their exchangeability, but rather as a result of the actions of Bible redactors. They were conscious of the closeness of meaning and phonetic value of the two, and replaced one with the other.

The same Greek word, being a transliteration of both forms, can be seen as another supporting argument. Both עפרה and אפרתה are rendered in LXX by the word Εφραθα, which may point to the identification of the toponyms. The linguistic aspect therefore sustains our hypothesis of a close interrelationship of the two place-names: "Ophra" and "Ephrata".

⁽²¹⁾ Such an idea had been presented by G. VON RAD, *Genesis. A Commentary* (London 1956).

⁽²²⁾ Cf. Num 19,9,10; 2 Sam 13,19; Job 13,12; Ps 102,10; Isa 44,20.

⁽²³⁾ BDB, 779-780; L. KOEHLER – W. BAUMGARTNER, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden – New York – Köln 1994) II, 861-862; Cf. A. MURTONEN, *Hebrew in Its West Semitic Setting. A Comparative Survey of Non-Masoretic Hebrew Dialects and Traditions* (Leiden – New York – København – Köln 1989) I/Bb, 99.

⁽²⁴⁾ U. CASSUTO, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem 1989) I, 75, pointed to the equivalence of the nouns 'pr and 'pr in Genesis 3,19 and Ezek 28,18 respectively.

Even if a philological analysis of the two toponyms allows us to identify them, and thus locate Ophra in a certain site in Palestine, further examination is still needed. The first task would be to establish the real denomination of the place Ephrata, with which we propose to identify the name Ophra. The next would be the identification of the name with a certain site.

One of the most instructive biblical passages helping to determine the location of the site is Mic 1,10: "Tell it not in Gath, weep not at all; in Beth-leaphrah (בֵּית לַעֲפְרָה) roll yourselves in the dust". Many commentators deem it hardly possible to know what place was intended here, and do not attempt to identify Beth-leaphrah, mentioned in Mic 1,10. However, as the entire passage described the sites in Judah, we can expect its location to be within this southern tribe⁽²⁵⁾.

Maybe the only exception is Wolfram von Soden, who pointed out a possible connection between Beth-leaphrah and the place name Ephrathah (אֶפְרַתָּה)⁽²⁶⁾. I believe this suggestion ought to be picked up on, especially as we do have another hint sustaining the connection of the name with Judah. In 1 Chr 4,14 the word "Ophra" (עֹפְרָה) is used to refer to the name of a person — a Judahite⁽²⁷⁾.

If one agrees that in both cases (1 Chr 4,14 and Mic 1,10) Ophra (עֹפְרָה; בֵּית לַעֲפְרָה) is connected to the territory of Judah then the location of the Gideon city within Manasseh is far from being the only possible solution.

Based on Gen 35,19; 48,7; 1 Sam 17,12 and Mic 5,2, the name "Ephrata" is commonly seen as a synonym of the city name Bethlehem (as in the analogous case where "Hebron" and "Kiriath-Arba" describe the same place). However, another usage of the name "Ephrata" presupposes a different identification, namely that Bethlehem and Ephrata are not identical. Ruth 1,2; 4,11 and 1 Chr 2,50-51; 4,4 indicate that the two place names denote different sites⁽²⁸⁾.

⁽²⁵⁾ D.R. HILLERS, "Micah, Book of", *ABD* IV, 807-810. Cf. C.S. SHAW, *The Speeches of Micah. A Rhetorical-Historical Analysis* (JSOTSS 145) (Sheffield 1993); F.I. ANDERSEN – D.N. FREEDMAN, *Micah* (AB 24E; New York 2000) 208-209; L.M. LUKER, "Beth-Le-Aphrah (place)", *ABD* I, 689.

⁽²⁶⁾ W. VON SODEN, "Zu einigen Ortsbenennungen bei Amos und Mich", *ZAH* 3 (1990) 214-220, esp. 217.

⁽²⁷⁾ According to the genealogy in 1 Chr 4,1-14, עֹפְרָה was the grandson of Othniel, son of Kenaz, descendent of Kaleb, mentioned also in Judg 3,7-11.

⁽²⁸⁾ A further complication appears when Gen 48,7 is analysed; there, the expression לְבָא אֶפְרַתָּה לְבֵן אֶפְרָיִם; ἡβραθα τῆς γῆς τοῦ ἐλθεῖν Εφραθα; is used. For its meaning see: G. GARBINI, *Note di lessicografia ebraica* (Brescia 1998) 34-39;

On analysing these passages carefully, one may conclude that the identification of the two names is secondary. There are three explanations for such an assumption. Firstly, the name Ephrata may be a denomination not of the city, but of the region in which Bethlehem was situated. Such a view is supported by Ruth 1,2, within the expression “Ephrathites from Bethlehem”. A further argument for this interpretation is found in Ps 132,6, where the expression “in Ephrathah” is put in straight parallelism with the expression “in the fields of Jaar” (cf. Jub 32,33-34; Mat 2,6).

Another explanation of the discrepancy in identifying the two toponyms can be provided if we accept the hypothesis that the toponym Ephrata (or any other, being its Vorlage, for example: בית עפרה) originally denoted a place other than Bethlehem, and was only secondarily identified with it.

The third explanation comes by the way of a diachronic hypothesis. It is possible that two different names were not in use simultaneously, but described the same place during a certain time span. An analogous situation happened with Jerusalem, which for quite a long time, along with its traditional name, was called Aelia Capitolina.

Whatever the case, there is no doubt that the material analysed hitherto points to the area of Bethlehem as the probable location of Ephrata.

Accordingly, we ought to look for a place fitting the description of an important administrative centre where a well-known cult place was situated, and one which would correspond to the description provided in the biblical account. Is there any place in which one could imagine Gideon to have demolished Baal's altar at the top of the fortress, and where the judge was buried?

There is no need to accept or reject the biblical account of the brave judge as historically reliable. It is enough to claim that some elements in the biblical story had to be so plausible as to be accepted as true. If indeed that were the case, secondary details would be crucial, and there would be no need to look for an altar. One would have to search for the fortress itself, which is far from being the primary element of the account.

If we accept the above argumentation, one ought to look no further

cf. E. Tov, *The Greek and Hebrew Bible. Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (Leiden – Boston – Köln 1999) 509; J.W. WEVERS, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* (Atlanta 1993) 583-584, 811.

than a place very close to Bethlehem, where an architectural structure identified with a fortress can be found, namely Ramat Rahel, located between Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

4. *Ramat Rahel as the biblical Ophra?*

The site was inhabited at the turn of the 9th and 8th centuries BCE. Initially, there was only a citadel, though the city gained in importance in later centuries (especially during the divided-monarchy period)⁽²⁹⁾. The large number of *mlk*-type seals found in Ramat Rahel from that period suggests the importance of the city in the Judahite administrative system⁽³⁰⁾. After being rebuilt for residential purposes, and later used as the royal palace⁽³¹⁾, the old citadel was destroyed at the beginning of the 6th century BCE, which may point to the Babylonian invasion or the early Babylonian period⁽³²⁾. Finds from the Persian period indicate intensive civil inhabitation, evidenced in the many seals and stamps of the *yhd* / *yhwd* type. In Ramat Rahel, there existed from the 5th to the 3rd centuries BCE a structure which Yohanan Aharoni called the Persian fortress⁽³³⁾.

The surprisingly few finds dating from the Hellenistic period may be attributed to the destruction of the site in the early 2nd century BCE (for example during the Antioch III invasion in 199 BCE)⁽³⁴⁾. The well-dated finds from the period come only from the later times, such as coins from the time of Alexander Janneus' reign (103-76

⁽²⁹⁾ Y. AHARONI et al., *Excavations at Ramat Rahel*. Seasons 1961 and 1962 (Roma 1964) 119-120; see Y. AHARONI, "Excavation at Ramat Rahel", *BA* 24, 4 (1961) 98-118; ID., "The Citadel of Ramat Rahel", *Archaeology* 18, 1 (1965) 15-25; ID., "Ramat Rahel", *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (ed. E. STERN) (Jerusalem – New York – London 1993) III, 1261-1267; cf. Z. HERZOG, *Archaeology of the City*. Urban planning in Ancient Israel and its Social Implications (Jerusalem 1997) 250, who points to Northern Kingdom influences in architecture, leading to the assumption that "refugees from the north introduced the stonemason's craft into Judah after the fall of Samaria and were employed by the royal court for construction work in the Capital and its surroundings". Future digs on the site, to be conducted by Oded Lipschits, could well reveal further precious finds.

⁽³⁰⁾ AHARONI, *Excavations at Ramat Rahel*, 119; N. NA'AMAN, "An Assyrian Residence at Ramat Rahel?", *Tel Aviv* 28 (2001) 260-280.

⁽³¹⁾ AHARONI, *Excavations at Ramat Rahel*, 120.

⁽³²⁾ *Ibid.*; the later destruction of the citadel is advocated on the base of King Jehoiaquin's seal (in stratum V A).

⁽³³⁾ AHARONI, *The Citadel*, 16.

⁽³⁴⁾ AHARONI, *Excavations at Ramat Rahel*, 121.

BCE)⁽³⁵⁾. Aharoni — one of the tell excavators — identified Ramat Rahel with biblical Beth ha-Kerem (Jer 6,1; Neh 3,14)⁽³⁶⁾. This proper name, translated as “house of the vineyard”⁽³⁷⁾, witnesses to the abundance of archaeological finds showing a high degree of wine production in and around this area. Aharoni furthermore states that Jehoiaakim’s palace (608-597), constructed close to Jerusalem’s city walls and mentioned in Jer 22,13-19, could be identified with the remains of investments found at Ramat Rahel⁽³⁸⁾.

Further confirmation of the identification of Ophra and Ramat Rahel is found in the city’s original name. According to the reconstruction proposed by Giovanni Garbini, who rejected the identification of Ramat Rahel as Beth ha-Kerem, another city name can be restored⁽³⁹⁾. Based on the Georgian Calendar from 10th century CE, he proposed the original form of the name: *Beto’er* / *Betebrey* / *Betebre* as: בית עפרה or בית חפר⁽⁴⁰⁾, with the latter form recalling the name used for Bethlehem in Mic 1,10 — Bet Efratah (בית לעפרה)⁽⁴¹⁾. The forms proposed by Garbini show the equivalence of the names deriving from the roots: *’pr* and *’pr*.

Archaeological works at Ramat Rahel show the dominant role of the citadel and large residential complex. The enigmatic fortified place from the story recalls Migdal Eder, the tower (מגדל) mentioned in the account of Rachel’s death (Gen 35,21). There is hardly any doubt as to the place of Rachel’s death being the same as her burial place. In Genesis one can find the information in מגדל עדר — “the tower of flock”⁽⁴²⁾. Unfortunately, we do not know whether it is the proper name of a certain tower, or the description of an anonymous architectural structure. To further complicate matters, we do not know where the structure mentioned in the text was located. In this context one may recall the biblical text where, in the account of Gideon, “a stronghold” (מצוד) is mentioned. Let us then speculatively propose the

⁽³⁵⁾ Ibid.

⁽³⁶⁾ Ibid., 122; cf. R.W. YOUNKER, “Beth-Haccerem”, *ABD* I, 686-687.

⁽³⁷⁾ Cf. The term כֶּרֶם in Deut 22,9; Is 3,14; Cant 8,11.

⁽³⁸⁾ AHARONI, *Excavations at Ramat Rahel*, 122-123.

⁽³⁹⁾ G. GARBINI, “Sul nome antico di Ramat Rahel”, *RSO* 16 (1961) 199-205; ID., *Note di lessicografia*, 36.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ The form of the name reconstructed by Garbini contains *ayin* not *aleph*.

⁽⁴¹⁾ This is a very corrupted verse, and probably the original form of the name is preserved in the Syriac version: בית עפרה.

⁽⁴²⁾ This name appears again in Mic 4,8, this time connected with Jerusalem. Cf. D.C. LUD, “Eder, Tower of”, *ABD* II, 284.

hypothesis that in בית עפרה there was a structure which could have been described as מגדל-עדר or מעון.

In his *Onomastikon*, Eusebius of Caesarea describes the place where Rachel was supposed to have died, and where Jacob made camp (Gen 35,21) - to quote, "Gader. A town where Jacob lived, and Reuben rose against Ballas"⁽⁴³⁾. The author, writing in the 4th century C.E., replaced Migdal-Eder with the name Gader. Moreover, he understood the word Balla in Gen 35,21 (in LXX this usually denotes Rachel's maid Bilhah) as the being against whom Reuben acted. The question remains as to why Eusebius, contrary to MT and LXX, refuses to allude to Reuben's sin with Bilhah, creating instead the story of Reuben acting against a certain Balla. The Greek text is quite clear: 'Ρουβὴν τῇ Βαλλὰ ἐπανίσταται. The Greek verb ἐπανάημι / ἐπανίστημι must be understood here as "to rise up against" or "to rise in insurrection"⁽⁴⁴⁾. Is it quite possible that Eusebius here alludes to the hero acting not against Balla (Βαλλὰ) but rather against Baal (Βααλ)? Is it possible that a certain tradition known to Eusebius created the connection between Reuben's acts and the story of Gideon-Jerubbaal? Is it then possible that מגדל-עדר, known from the story of Reuben, where he arose against Baal, is the same as מעון, where Gideon arose against Baal?

On the basis of above-proposed hypothesis it is quite possible to hazard a further evaluation of the name מגדל-עדר. As well as appearing in Gen 35, this proper name is found in Mic 4,8⁽⁴⁵⁾, where it is linked to the acts of the future Messiah. The Messiah, according to the book of Micah, must come from Bethlehem — Ephrata (5,1). One may surmise that the two places, being closely related to the future Messiah (mentioned in Mic 4,8 and 5,1), are identical. If that is indeed the case, Ephrata might well be the other name of Migdal-Eder.

Having gone so far in my hypothetical reconstruction, it is not too much to suggest the logical emendation in MT — changing עדר into עפר. It is important at this juncture to note that reading מגדל-עדר is far from being certain, especially when we consider LXX. The transliteration in "πύργος Γαδερ" (Gen 35,21(16)) i.e., "the fortified

⁽⁴³⁾ *The Onomasticon by Eusebius of Caesarea* (ed. J.E. TAYLOR) (Jerusalem 2003) 39. Cf. *Eusebius: Das Onomastikon der biblischen Ortsnamen* (ed. E. KLOSTERMANN) (Leipzig 1904).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ LSJ⁹, 609; J. LUST et al., *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Stuttgart 1992) I, 165.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Re complications in interpreting this passage see: ANDERSEN –FREEDMAN, *Micah*, 438-441.

tower” does not support the Masoretic reading⁽⁴⁶⁾. The above-suggested emendation *מגדל-עפר would not be an isolated case, as similar forms are to be found in the Hebrew Bible (cf. מגדל-שכם in Judg 9,46-52, and מגדל-גדר in Josh 15,37). Perhaps then one must look at 1 Chr 2,51: “Salma father of Bethlehem, and Hareph father of Bethgader”. Although the genealogy of Kalebiters points to the separation of two places Bethlehem and Bethgader, it does support their closeness, which together with the meaningful version used by Eusebius, might suggest the identification of מגדל-גדר / בית-גדר and *מגדל-עפר / *בית-עפר⁽⁴⁷⁾. To summarise, if in fact *מגדל-עפר is referred to in both Micah and Genesis 35, there is hardly any doubt as to why some messianic hopes were connected with a person like Gideon.

That said, one is inclined to say that the identification of Gideon’s Ephra with Ephrata (modern Ramat Rahel), in other words the reconstructed *מגדל-עפר / *בית-עפר, is far more plausible than any connection with Bethlehem.

We may suppose that the Greek version of the Bible contains the original form of the name, which would rather be pronounced “Ephrata” as opposed to “Ophra”. If we agree that the form “Ophra” is an artificial creation used merely to replace the older form “Ephra” (עפר) (or *Migdal-Ephra; *Bet-Ephra), with both being used to denote the place known now as Ramat Rahel⁽⁴⁸⁾, we must then ask the question ‘why?’. The key lies in the royal ideology concentrated around the house of David. This royal house, which had become holy as part of the process of increasing messianic thought, was anchored in “the” certain city — the city of origin of the first king.

5. Rachel’s burial place or Gideon’s capital?

The above hypothesis presents the identification of Gideon’s home city with the place where Rachel is said to have been buried. A clear question remains: which tradition, or which reality, was original — Rachel’s burial place or Gideon’s capital?

⁽⁴⁶⁾ The Hebrew word גדר appears in connection with toponyms Bethlehem and Ephratah in 1 Chr 4,4.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Cf. S.E. MCGARRY, “Beth Gader”, *ABD* I, 686.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Cf. H. CAZELLES, “Bethlehem”, *ABD* I, 712-715. The identification of “Bethlehem” and “Ephrata” can also be found in the work of the Jewish historian from the 3rd century BCE – Demetrius (fr. 2, 10). For editions see F. JACOBY, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin 1923) 722; A.-M. DENIS, *Fragmenta Pseudepigraphorum quae supersunt graeca* (Leiden 1970); C.R. HOLLADAY, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors* (Chico 1983), I, 68-69.

It is enough at this point to state that the place called *Migdal-Ephra or *Bet-Ephra, and transformed in the Bible into "Ephrata", was connected with the two. Such an identification must have been followed, or accompanied, by two other processes in biblical tradition. Firstly, the place where Rachel gave birth to Benjamin, and later died, was moved from the territory of Benjamin southwards to the territory of Judah. Secondly, the artificial identification of Ephrata-Bethlehem was created. In particular, the latter of these literary events had its impact on the messianic tradition, although it is quite possible that Bethlehem appropriated the unusual city prerogatives, which had originally belonged only to Ephrata⁽⁴⁹⁾.

This phenomenon can be best explained by accepting the hypothesis that Gideon's origins lay in Ephrata, and accepting the tradition that David originated from Bethlehem as secondary, with strong borrowings from the first. If this is the case, David's figure would be the personage created out of the tradition of the judge. It is quite possible in this perspective that the tradition of the king, coming from the Philistine dominium, and becoming successor to the Benjaminite king, was built on, and grew with the help of, elements of the tradition of a different person.

This may suggest a presence in the story of Gideon of the old strata connecting the figure of the hero with the monarchy, combat against enemies and religious reform. Characteristically enough, the writer, coming under the strong influence of deuteronomistic ideology, and having described the "good" monarch who came from the royal residence par excellence, had to conclude the story with a sharp critique of the monarchy and the acts of the same hero (Judg 8,26-27).

In accepting the above reconstruction, we are presented with the following set of data. Gideon comes from בית-עפר (i.e., the royal residence or fortress in modern Ramat Rahel); David comes from Bethlehem (בית-לחם). Subsequently, the two places (Bethlehem and Ephrata - אפרתה) become identified with each other. This process (cf. 1 Sam 17,12) had to be associated with the "moving" of Rachel's burial place from the territory of Benjamin to the area of Judah (אפרתה). The biblical text claims openly that Rachel died "some distance from Ephrath" (Gen 35,16), and "on the way to Ephrath" (Gen 35,19). Although this is hardly an appropriate place to discuss the

⁽⁴⁹⁾ This issue is far too complicated to be analysed here. I hope to concentrate on it soon.

entire complicated issue related to the “moving” of Rachel’s burial place and other borrowings of traditions from Benjamin to Judah, it is possible that there existed at a certain time the tradition of Rachel’s tomb being close to the royal residence and fortress in בית-עפר, where Gideon came from, and very close to the city of Bethlehem, where David is said to have come from.

The situation could well be viewed (by the Bible-writers) as complicated, given that Gideon originated from the royal city (and had very strong connections with royal ideology as well; let us recall the *Seper ha-Yamim* where he is called “king”). On the history-mythical level Gideon had become rival to the main figure of the royal (and consequently messianic) ideology originating from Bethlehem — namely David. The changes seen in Judges, as well as the attempt at removing Gideon from the royal city of Ephratah, may be understood as a means of guaranteeing the dominant position of David.

The same reasons may well have influenced the putting in Gideon’s mouth of the important statement following his defeat of the Midianite army, declaring an unwillingness to become king: “Then the Israelites said to Gideon, ‘Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also; for you have delivered us out of the hand of Midian’. Gideon said to them, ‘I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you’” (Judg 8,22-23).

The well-known case of building the heroic myth of king David, whilst diminishing the fame of others, or constructing the myth thanks to the fame of others, can be recalled in this case. The figure of Elkanah (2 Sam 21,19), whose triumph over Goliath was attributed to David, may offer the best example of the practice of building the myth of David through the actions of others. A similar thing could have happened with Gideon, who — like Elkanah — was not deleted from the Bible, but whose fame was attributed to David. There is still a certain difference between Gideon and Elkanah, given that the former was so well known it was impossible to erase his importance and fame from the text. This slight correction was made by creating the city of his origin so as not to present a form of rivalry to David. The mythical plot of Gideon’s acts remained in the Bible, but the Bible-writer tried to hide the similarities between the two royal figures.

One may summarize by stating that it is possible that, by a process of assimilation, the tradition of the brave, righteous and God-fearing judge Gideon was incorporated into the large tradition concentrated around Bethlehem. Maybe here the connection between Gideon and

the enigmatic judge Ibzan from Bethlehem can be found (Judg 12,8-10). Even more striking effects can be seen if we accept Gideon as the Judahite hero.

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* *

The place name Ophra, attested in the narrative about Gideon in Judges, seems to have only a secondary connection with the clan of Abiezer and the tribe of Manasseh. The toponym itself, transmitted in MT, is possibly an artificial, altered form of the original name. As such it could be derived from one of the interrelated roots *'rp* or *'rp* and preserved in the LXX as Εφραθα. This assumption permits the hypothesis of identifying Ophra, known from the Gideon story with Ephrata, and other place names (e.g., Beth-leaphrah in Mic 1,10). Most of the possibilities suggest a relationship with the territory of Judah.

The identification of Gideon's city, where the important role was reserved for a fortress or tower, with Ephrata in Judah, finds support not only in linguistics but in archaeology as well. A good candidate for the city of such an important hero, a judge of royal charism, is modern Ramat-Rahel. The structures excavated there, used as a fortress and royal residence, might have been the original location where Gideon's narrative (Judges 6) took place. Whatever the original toponym (*Ephra; *Migdal-Ephra; *Bet-Ephra), it could have been connected with Gideon. The reason why the redactors altered the text, and "moved" Gideon's city northward to the territory of Manasseh was the literary conflict between two important figures of Judahite origins, the king-like Gideon and David, king *par excellence*.

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SUMMARY

The hypothesis presented in this article offers a new way of explaining a number of discrepancies in the biblical text. Perhaps more importantly, it opens the door to the identification of a place known from the biblical tradition with a known site of archaeological importance. Finally, the identification of Ophra with Ramat Rahel, which in ancient times was very likely called בית־עפרה / בית־עפר, sheds light on the tradition of connecting Ephratah (אֶפְרַתָּה) with Judah, (1 Chr 1,19. 50), and the hitherto difficult בית לעפרה in Mic 1,10.

The So-called Ostrich in the God Speeches of the Book of Job (Job 39,13-18)

Biblical scholars and literary critics continue to debate the meaning and adequacy of God's response to Job, the climax of one of the great works of world literature. At the end of the first speech, God asks Job questions about a series of wild and dangerous animals (38,39 – 39,30). As Carol Newsom observes, "these images play such an important role in the development of the significance of the divine speeches, they deserve close attention"⁽¹⁾. Because of the difficulties it poses for interpretation, much discussion has focused on the so-called ostrich pericope (39,13-18). A whole body of proposed emendations and interpretations has grown up to explain a number of problems with the Hebrew text. In verse 13, why is the *hapax legomenon* רִנְיִים used of an ostrich? Why does it have a plural ending? What does her "wing rejoices" mean? What does "a gracious pinion and plumage" in the second half of verse 13 mean? Does the mother bird "abandon" (v. 14) her eggs and is she "cruel" (v. 16) to her young? If she is an ostrich, how could a wild animal step on "her" (v. 15)? What does the *hapax* תַּמְרוֹם in verse 18 mean? How can בְּמָרוֹם, literally "on the height", apply to an ostrich? Despite all these problems, few have questioned the identification with an ostrich, and none that I am aware of have used biological information to investigate other possible species. The thesis of this article is twofold. First, the *hapax* רִנְיִים is not an ostrich and there is enough biological information in the passage to identify a more likely bird, probably a sand grouse. Second, identifying the correct type of bird resolves a number of difficulties for translation and interpretation, and helps clarify the literary role of the passage in the book of Job.

The first section of the article presents a translation of the passage and the arguments against identifying רִנְיִים as an ostrich. The second part of the article examines evidence from the passage about the bird's nesting habits, behaviour, and song that indicate the רִנְיִים is probably a sand grouse. At the same time these first two sections begin to show that an understanding of the sand grouse and its behaviours helps to

⁽¹⁾ C.A. NEWSOM, *The Book of Job. A Contest of Moral Imaginations* (Oxford 2003) 245.

make sense of aspects of the passage that have puzzled scholars to which the third section adds examples from verses 16 and 17. In the fourth and final section, parting the veil of modern folk tales about the ostrich helps clarify the relationship of the passage to the God speeches and the book of Job, and recover often-overlooked aspects of God's reply to Job.

I.

Since translations of the pericope (Job 39,13-18) vary widely, I begin with my own translation. A number of new or rare ways of translating the Hebrew that arise from the research are explained in footnotes or will be explained later in the article.

13. The sand grouse's wing rejoices⁽²⁾
but is it a gracious pinion and plumage⁽³⁾?
14. For she lays on the earth her eggs,
upon dust she does her brooding.
15. She forgets that a foot might crush her,
a wild animal trample her.
16. She makes chicks that are hardy⁽⁴⁾ without her⁽⁵⁾.
That worthless is her labor she has no worry.

⁽²⁾ Other pericopes in the animal discourse (38,41-30) begin with one or more interrogatives. In a few cases וְהִיא can introduce a question (*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* [ed. E. Kautzsch][London, 1910] §150 f 2; 1 Kgs 1,27; Isa 29,16; Job 16,12; 39,13). Isa 29,16 is especially instructive because there the question follows an exclamation. I have, therefore, not emended the text, and have translated the first colon in the indicative and the second colon that begins with וְהִיא in the interrogative.

⁽³⁾ The translation "though its pinions lack plumage" (NRSV) requires emendation and makes little sense because ostrich wings have feathers that represented truth and justice in the ancient Near East. Others emend the text so that pinion is in the construct and translate "the pinion and plumage of a stork" or by repointing plumage translate "the pinion of the female stork and female raptor". Because חַסִּידָה could be either a feminine form of the adjective "kind" or a "female stork" and נֶצַח "plumage" can be repointed to read "raptor", there is certainly an allusion to stork and raptor, but there is no need for emendation. The phrase is polysemous.

⁽⁴⁾ Most modern commentators suggest emending or repointing the first word of verse sixteen: "he treats harshly". Because the MT is more difficult than the proposed emendation, this translation follows Hartley in repointing as an infinitive absolute (J.E. HARTLEY, *The Book of Job* [NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 1988] 509). The reasons for then translating "she makes chicks that are hardy" will be given in the body of this article.

⁽⁵⁾ R. GORDIS, *The Book of Job*. Commentary, New Translation and Special Studies (New York 1978) 440, 460.

17. For God has made her forget wisdom;
He has not given her a share of understanding.
18. When on high she soars⁽⁶⁾,
she laughs at the horse and its rider.

Although many biblical scholars have written about the difficulties of translating the so-called ostrich passage (Job 39,13-18), few have questioned the identification of the *hapax legomenon* רִנְנִים (v. 13) with an ostrich. An exception is Hans-Peter Müller who has advanced some persuasive arguments against an ostrich: רִנְנִים was not translated as ostrich by early Greek versions, the Peshitta, and the Targum; it is not the name for ostrich elsewhere in Hebrew or the Semitic languages; the description is zoologically incorrect; and the identification probably came from early Christian devotional reflection on nature⁽⁷⁾. This section of the article briefly examines his arguments based on the Semitic languages, the Versions, and early Christian literature, to which it adds arguments from the context.

The form רִנְנִים occurs only in Job 39,13. It appears to be from the root רִנַּן which means “cry” either in joy or in lamentation. Biblical Hebrew uses another root for the ostrich, עָן, which is used in Job 30,29⁽⁸⁾. Other Semitic languages have other names for the ostrich and

⁽⁶⁾ The root of this word (תַּמְרִיץ) appears only here. Some postulate metathesis and emend to תַּמְרִיץ “go aloft” (GORDIS, *Job*, 460-461) or רָאָם “rise”. Others appeal to an Arabic root *mr* meaning “whipping or spurring horse” (G. HÖLSCHER, *Das Buch Hiob* [Tübingen 1952] 92; S. R. DRIVER – G. B. GRAY, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* [ICC; Edinburgh 1921] 320; A. GUILLAUME, *Studies in the Book of Job*. With a New Translation, [ed. J. MACDONALD] [Leiden 1968] 17) though Pope finds this “unsatisfactory” (M.H. POPE, *Job*. Introduction, Translation, and Notes [AB; Garden City, NY 1965] 262) and Müller thinks it has no basis in the cognate languages (H.-P. MÜLLER, “Die sog. Straußenperikope in den Gottesreden des Hiobbuches”, *ZAW* 100 [1988] 102). Habel’s suggestion that the root is related to the root מָרָה “revolt” and means “rise up, be roused” (N. HABEL, *The Book of Job*. A Commentary [OTL; Philadelphia 1985] 525) seems plausible because in Hebrew roots with the same two first letters sometimes have similar meanings and *’aleph* sometimes replaces *he*. It requires no emendation or appeal to cognate languages.

⁽⁷⁾ MÜLLER, “Straußenperikope”, 90-105; N.H. Tur-Sinai (Torczyner) thought the passage referred to a fable about two birds who abandon their young (*The Book of Job*. A New Commentary [Jerusalem 1967] 543-544).

⁽⁸⁾ Other than the Qere in Lamentations 4,3 where it appears alone as a masculine plural (עֲנִים), it occurs as בְּחִידֵי עֵמָה (Lev 11,16) or בְּנוֹת הָעֵמָה (Deut 14,15; Job 30,29; Isa 13,21; 34,13; 43,20; Jer 50,39; Mic 1,8).

nowhere that I can discover is the root רנן used for ostrich⁽⁹⁾. Moreover, if one were going to name an ostrich according to a striking feature, its voice would hardly be the first choice.

The three early Greek translations do not translate רננים as ostrich. Theodotion (Θ) has τερπομένων “Delighted Ones” or “Merry Ones”⁽¹⁰⁾. The Septuagint translates the root רנן as τερπεῖν “be glad” in Zech 2,14 (Eng. 10) and Ps 64,9 (MT 65,9, Eng. 65,8). Aquila has αἰνούντων “praising one” and Symmachus has ἀγλαίσμοῦ “splendid one”. All three early Greek versions seem in various ways to translate based on the meaning of the Hebrew root רנן.

The Peshitta and Targum also do not identify רננים as an ostrich. The Peshitta normally uses נעם for ostrich⁽¹¹⁾ but uses a word derived from the root שבח “praise”. This is probably similar to Aquila’s translation. The Targum has תרנגיל “cock”. Müller thinks this represents a Hebrew text in which *nun* and *gimel* were confused resulting in רננים. The Targum then finds in תרנגיל an equivalent with the same radicals⁽¹²⁾. Thus three early Greek versions, the Peshitta, and the Targum do not translate רננים as ostrich.

Jerome (c. 342-420) is the earliest dateable evidence Müller can find for the identification of רננים as a female ostrich. Though he suspects that the Old Latin translation Jerome used might have gone back to an earlier Greek one that differed from Theodotian⁽¹³⁾. He thinks the reason, largely ignored by modern scholarship, for the identification of רננים as a female ostrich is a passage from a popular,

⁽⁹⁾ Akkadian, Arabic, Aramaic, Syriac, Ugaritic (AHw, CAD, M. JASTROW, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* [New York 1903], R. PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus* [Oxford 1879-1901], C.H. GORDON, *Ugaritic Textbook* [Rome 1965]). I would like to thank D. Wilmsen of the American University in Cairo for help with Arabic. Although he consulted lexicons in Arabic, only references to those in English are included here (E.W. LANE, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* [London 1863-1893. Reprint Cambridge 1984]; H. WEHR, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* [ed. J.M. COWAN] [London 1974]). He pointed out that Arabic has a general epithet for birds, *murinna*, derived from the root *rnn*. This would support Müller’s translation “songbird”. It could be a general epithet applied in the present passage to a sand grouse. The Arabic word for ostrich is *na’ama* as in Syriac.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Müller thinks Theodotian’s translation is influenced by Isa 54,1 where the root צהל “praise, cry shrilly” is in parallel with רנן (“Straußenperikope”, 92, n. 7).

⁽¹¹⁾ *A Compendius Syriac Dictionary* (ed. J. PAYNE SMITH) (Oxford 1903) 343. Also PAYNE SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2405.

⁽¹²⁾ MÜLLER, “Straußenperikope”, 93.

⁽¹³⁾ MÜLLER, “Straußenperikope”, 94.

early Christian edifying cycle of observations on nature that confused the stork and the ostrich⁽¹⁴⁾. The passage combined Job 39,14 and Jer 8,7 and read the transliteration of the Hebrew word for stork in Jer 8,7 (אσιδα) as ostrich (στρουθοκάμηλος)⁽¹⁵⁾.

Jeremiah the Prophet says of this animal, 'Even the ostrich in heaven knows her own time' [Jer 8,7]. ... When her time comes for laying eggs, this animal raises her eyes to the heavens. ... When the ostrich sees that Virgilia has risen in the heavens, she digs a hole in the desert ground, deposits her eggs, and covers them with sand. Once having departed that place, however, she immediately forgets it and does not return to her eggs, for this animal is by nature forgetful. ...

If the ostrich knows her own time and raises her eyes to heaven and forgets her young, how much more fitting is it for us to know our time, forget earthly things and pursue heavenly things and to raise the eyes of our hearts?⁽¹⁶⁾

Physiologus was probably written no later than the end of the fourth century and uses a wide variety of sources, some of which go much further back in history⁽¹⁷⁾. Since Jerome did his translation work at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, Physiologus, either directly or indirectly, could have been the source of his translation of רננים as ostrich.

A number of features of the context also argue against the translation of רננים as ostrich. The MT of verse 15, translated rather literally, reads: "She forgets that a foot might crush her, a wild animal trample her". It is difficult to imagine an animal stepping on an ostrich and, in my opinion, provides a strong argument against translating רננים as an ostrich. Since most commentators and translators assume the רננים is an ostrich, they take the pronouns as referring, not to the mother, but to her eggs and translate: "She forgets that a foot might crush them, a wild animal trample them"⁽¹⁸⁾. To support this translation appeal is made to a "very rarely found" use of the third feminine singular pronoun referring to a plural of things⁽¹⁹⁾. This appeal to a rare

⁽¹⁴⁾ MÜLLER, "Straußenperikope", 94.

⁽¹⁵⁾ B. LAUFER, "Ostrich Egg-shell Cups of Mesopotamia and the Ostrich in Ancient and Modern Times", *Anthropology Leaflet* 23 (Chicago 1926) 13.

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Physiologus* (ed. M.J. CURLEY) (Austin – London 1979) 55-56.

⁽¹⁷⁾ *Physiologus*, xvii–xxvi.

⁽¹⁸⁾ The LXX has no pronouns.

⁽¹⁹⁾ P. JOÜON, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (trans. and rev. T. MURAOKA) (Roma 1993), §149a; *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, §135p.

usage is unnecessary if *רננים* is not an ostrich but a smaller, ground-nesting bird.

Some other expressions in the passage apply to the ostrich only with great difficulty. Verse 18 literally says, “on the high place” (*במרום*). Commentators and translators usually interpret the word as referring to the ostrich standing up to run (KJV) or raising its wings when it runs (NRSV). The Hebrew word usually refers to heaven as the dwelling place of God and occasionally to a high mountain or hill, or metaphorically to the arrogant who lift their eyes “on high”. How could an ostrich be in the sky, or dwelling on a high hill? Many other birds, however, fly in the heavens or make their nests in high places. Later in the animal discourse, verse 26 speaks of the hawk soaring and verse 27 uses a verb from the same root to describe the eagle making its nest “on high”. Significantly, the NJPS understands the phrase as referring to flight and translates “soar on high”. It translates verses 17 and 18 as “God deprived her of wisdom ... Else she would soar on high”. Although the bird in question is most likely not an ostrich, the NJPS translators have rightly seen that “on high” (*במרום*) probably refers to a bird flying.

Therefore, the *רננים* is probably not an ostrich. As Müller has shown, *רננים* is not a name for the ostrich in Hebrew or the Semitic languages, is not translated as ostrich by the early Greek versions, the Peshitta, and Targums, and probably came from a mistaken identification in Physiologus. In addition, translators have found expressions like “a foot might crush her” (v. 15) and “on the high place” (v. 18) difficult to understand and had to engage in special pleading to make them fit an ostrich. The following sections will discuss other cases where the passage has been forced to fit the ostrich, but I hope that the reader now has enough reason to consider another bird.

II.

If the *רננים* is not an ostrich, then some detective work is necessary to identify new suspects. While one might not expect ornithological precision from a poet, this observation should not be used to legitimate a mistaken identification produced by ancient Christian piety. The passage provides several clues to the identity of the bird.

First, the passage indicates that the bird lays her eggs on the ground: “For she lays on the earth her eggs, on dust she does her brooding” (v. 14). If this can be taken literally, it describes an unlined

scrape. The mention of dust, עפר⁽²⁰⁾, seems to indicate the nest is in an arid area on dirt or sand, probably in the desert. Müller translates רננים as “songbird”, based on the early versions, but few species that are called songbirds in English nest directly on the ground (v. 14). For the poet to have knowledge of the nesting habits of the bird, it would need to be a bird that breeds in the Middle East rather than one of the numerous species that migrate through. The רננים, therefore, is probably a bird that nests in an unlined scrape in the desert in the Middle East.

Second, the passage may provide information about the call or calls of the bird that could help narrow the list of suspects. Two references to the call of the bird form an *inclusio* around the pericope. The name of the bird in the first verse (13) is from a root that can mean a cry of joy or lamentation. In the final verse (18), the bird “laughs” at the horse and its rider. The bird could have a call that sounds either to be both laughing and mournful like a Herring Gull, or have two different cries. If the plural ending is an intensive plural⁽²¹⁾, then this would be additional evidence that the call is particularly piercing or harmonious. Although commentators have commonly interpreted רננים as referring to a mournful cry to fit an ostrich, a joyous call seems more likely in the literary context. The root of the word after רננים is עלס “rejoice”. Some modern interpreters emend עלסה “rejoices” to עלה “go up” following ancient versions and say it refers to ostriches holding aloft their wings as they run. “Rejoices”, however, is more likely to be original because it is difficult and, as Habel says, “represents fine lyrical style”⁽²²⁾. The meaning of the root רנן the other time it appears in Job refers to a cry of joy (29,13). Moreover, a cry of joy would cohere with the laughter in verse eighteen. The רננים, therefore, probably has a noteworthy and joyous call.

Finally, could the opening reference to the “wing of the רננים” be another clue? Could there be a concrete reference behind this expression? Is there something about the wing or the flight of the רננים

⁽²⁰⁾ While this word has a range of meanings, a basic and frequently occurring meaning is “dry earth, dust” (F. BROWN – S.R. DRIVER – C. A. BRIGGS, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* [Oxford 1907] 779).

⁽²¹⁾ MÜLLER, “Straußenperikope”, 101; Another possibility is that this is a case of a plural used to name a whole species (B.K. WALTKE – M. O’CONNOR, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, IN. 1990] §7.4.3 citing Zech 9,9 and Cant 2,9 as examples).

⁽²²⁾ HABEL, *The Book of Job*, 525.

that would appear to a poet to be rejoicing? For instance, the Hoopoe Lark has a “striking black and white wing-pattern” and “prolonged musical whistling and piping song may be uttered on the ground or during display flight, when male spirals conspicuously upwards and descends again on outstretched wings”⁽²³⁾. In this case, the wing, flight pattern, and song all combine in conspicuous rejoicing. The pericope would then move from breeding (v. 13) through the laying of eggs (v. 14) to the raising of chicks (v. 16). In sum, the evidence in the passage indicates that the *רננים* nests in the Middle East in an unlined scrape, has a noteworthy and joyous call, and has behaviors that could be described as its wing rejoicing.

Some birds have some of these characteristics. As mentioned, the Hoopoe Lark could be said to have a joyous song and a wing that rejoices, but the nests of larks are often lined⁽²⁴⁾. Stone curlews nest directly on the ground. Their cries, however, can be described as “loud and raucous”⁽²⁵⁾ or a “wild shrill wailing ‘coo-lee’”⁽²⁶⁾, which are distinctive, but not particularly joyous.

Sand grouse, however, have all the characteristics. They nest in the Middle East and lay their eggs directly on the sand in the desert. They are fast, strong fliers, often traveling long distances in noisy flocks for water. These flocks can perform “aerial evolutions”⁽²⁷⁾ so their wings could be said to rejoice. Moreover, the calls of sand grouse are both noteworthy and joyous. Meinertzhagen and Heinzel, Fitter, and Parslow all describe some of their calls as “musical” and “harmonious”⁽²⁸⁾. The Coronated or Crowned Sand Grouse (*Pterocles coronatus*), the Spotted Sand Grouse (*Pterocles senegallus*), the Singed or Chestnut-Bellied Sand Grouse (*Pterocles exestus*), Pin-tailed Sand Grouse⁽²⁹⁾ (*Pterocles alchata*) and the Black-bellied Sand

⁽²³⁾ H. HEINZEL – R. FITTER – J. PARSLow, *The Birds of Britain and Europe with North Africa and the Middle East* (London 31974) 198.

⁽²⁴⁾ U. PAZ, *The Birds of Israel* (New York 1987) 175-176.

⁽²⁵⁾ PAZ, *Birds*, 96.

⁽²⁶⁾ HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 42; cf. C. R. MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia* (Edinburgh 1954) 469.

⁽²⁷⁾ HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 166.

⁽²⁸⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 458, 459; HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 166, 168.

⁽²⁹⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 459-461 refers to *Pterocles alchata* as the Large Pin-tailed Sand Grouse and *Pterocles exestus* as the Small Pin-tailed Sand Grouse. I have used the English names of HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 168.

Grouse (*Pterocles orientalis*) all breed in Palestine. Their appearance, calls, and behaviours resemble each other and other species of sand grouse. Meinertzhagen says the “flight call” of the Spotted Sand Grouse “is a musical *cuddle, cuddle, cuddle*”⁽³⁰⁾. Heinzel, Fitter, and Parslow describe its call as a “distinctive liquid, musical call”⁽³¹⁾. Meinertzhagen characterizes the call of the Singed or Chestnut-bellied Sand Grouse as “a loud musical *gutter, gutter* and when drinking there is a constant musical *creen*”⁽³²⁾. Heinzel, Fitter, and Parslow describe the call as a “harmonious deep-toned call *gouta, gouta*”⁽³³⁾. The musical quality of the calls of these sand grouse might be reason to name them from a root that can refer to a call of rejoicing.

The above calls invite comparison to the laughter referred to at the end of the periscope and some other sand grouse calls sound even more like laughter. The call of the Crowned Sand Grouse can be described as a *kla, kla, kla* or *cha-chagarra*⁽³⁴⁾. Heinzel says the call of the Pin-tailed Sand Grouse is “a loud ringing *kata, kata*, frequently uttered in flight”⁽³⁵⁾. Meinertzhagen says they are “very noisy when watering, the call resembling *ka-kra*, rapidly repeated”. He says that in Syria they sometimes occur “in incredible numbers, packs darkening the sky and their chattering becoming deafening as they pass overhead on their way to and from water”⁽³⁶⁾. A large number of noisy birds with a laugh-like call might spook horses and seem to be mocking them. Ground-nesting birds will often stay motionless on the ground, relying on their camouflage, until an animal is very close, and only at the last moment burst into flight. The flight and alarm call are often noisy, apparently designed to startle the predator long enough for the bird to escape. Such a bird that suddenly took flight near the feet of a horse might startle the horse and, combined with a laugh-like alarm call, might seem to be mocking a horse and rider.

In summary, the description of the bird in the passage points to a sand grouse. They have noteworthy and joyous calls (v. 13). Combined with the acrobatic flight of flocks, their wings could be described as

⁽³⁰⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 458.

⁽³¹⁾ HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 166.

⁽³²⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 459.

⁽³³⁾ HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 168.

⁽³⁴⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 456; HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 166.

⁽³⁵⁾ HEINZEL – FITTER – PARSLow, *Birds*, 168.

⁽³⁶⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 460.

rejoicing (v. 13). Sand grouse lay their eggs directly on the ground in desert areas in Israel (v. 14). They rely on their camouflage and may only take flight when a large animal is about to step on them (v. 15). Sand grouse also have calls that sound like laughter and, when they startle a horse and its rider by suddenly soaring up from the ground, might seem to be mocking them (v. 18). The calls and behaviours of sand grouse, therefore, closely match the evidence of the passage.

III

Moreover, the identification of the רננים as a sand grouse and an understanding of sand grouse behaviour helps clarify several difficult parts of the passage that have puzzled scholars. We have already seen a number of these — the name of the bird, the description of its wing rejoicing, the possibility that a wild animal might step on her (v. 15), and the reference to the bird soaring on high and laughing at a horse and its rider (v. 18). An understanding of the behaviours of sand grouse also helps explain verses 16-17.

Although the commonplace statement that the passage is zoologically incorrect for an ostrich and based on folk traditions would support the thesis of this paper, I find it an oversimplification based on a questionable translation of the Hebrew and analysis of folk traditions. According to the customary translation, the hen lacks wisdom (v. 17) and is “cruel” to her young (הקשיח; v. 16) because she “leaves” (העזב; v. 14 NRSV) or abandons them on the ground. This they say is zoologically incorrect because ostriches may leave the nest to draw away large predators but take turns incubating their eggs. Even if ostriches have to leave them for short periods, many potential predators would be unable to break the tough shells⁽³⁷⁾. For this reason Dahood appeals to Ugaritic where the root ‘zb means “lay”⁽³⁸⁾. Certainly, the statement that the bird has not been given understanding (v. 17) shows a lack of appreciation for the physical and behavioural adaptations of ground-nesting birds. However, עזב has a range of meanings that include “leave in safety”⁽³⁹⁾. The multiple meanings

⁽³⁷⁾ G. CANSDALE (*All the Animals of the Bible Lands* [Grand Rapids 1970] 193) says “the eggs have such thick shells that they are not easily broken by accident. Only a few animals have mouths large enough to smash one of these eggs”.

⁽³⁸⁾ See footnote 4.

⁽³⁹⁾ Isa 10,3; BROWN – DRIVER – C. A. BRIGGS, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 737 1d.

may be appropriate in the context. On the one hand, the word may be translated “lays” because that is within the range of meanings of the word and it is in parallel with “broods”. On the other hand, the word may allude to the bird sometimes leaving the nest or the poets feeling that laying eggs in an unlined scrape, even if well tended, verges on abandonment. Therefore, the word may both mean “lays” and allude to a sense of abandonment.

The root קשה in verse 16, however, may not mean “cruel”. The one other use of this root in the Hebrew Bible, also in the Hiphil, means “make hard”⁽⁴⁰⁾. The more frequently occurring and related root, קשה , can mean “make hard or stubborn” in the Hiphil. Sand grouse chicks (like the chicks of the ostrich and other ground-nesting birds) are highly precocial. Soon after they hatch, they are able to walk. They leave the nest within the first day and are able to feed themselves. Maclean says of Namaqua Sand Grouse that when an intruder approaches and the parent gives a warning call, the chicks either “crouch where they are” or if the intruder is still at some distance run to a “shrub or stone and crouch in the shade”⁽⁴¹⁾. He also says that “sometimes both parents go to drink together, leaving the chicks crouched under shrubs on the calcrete”⁽⁴²⁾. The young of the sand grouse are parallel to the young deer who “become strong”, “grow up in the open”, “go forth, and do not return to them” (39,4; NRSV). The verse may refer to stubborn, hardy, and independent chicks and accordingly I have translated, “she makes chicks that are hardy”⁽⁴³⁾. Thus, an understanding of the behaviours of ground-nesting birds helps explain the Hebrew of verse 16 and its literary connection to verse 4.

Furthermore, the appeal to folk ideas lacks methodological rigor. Bochart and Laufer provide several classical Greco-Roman and Arab references to the cruelty and stupidity of the ostrich⁽⁴⁴⁾. Laufer and Delitzsch provide contemporary stories including stories from Arab

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Isa 63,17.

⁽⁴¹⁾ G.L. MACLEAN, “Field Studies on the Sandgrouse of the Kalahari Desert”, *Living Bird* 7 (1968) 227.

⁽⁴²⁾ MACLEAN, “Field Studies”, 224.

⁽⁴³⁾ Similarly, Gordis, translates “she makes tough” based on an Arab cognate (*Job*, 440, 460).

⁽⁴⁴⁾ S. BOCHART, *Hierozoicon* (Frankfurt am Main 1675) II, 217-231, 238-249 [lib. 2, cap. 14, 16]; LAUFER, “Ostrich Egg-shell Cups”, 26.

hunters related to Delitzsch by Wetzstein⁽⁴⁵⁾. But these references are all later than Job. The only ancient Near Eastern evidence that I am aware of that scholars give for an ancient “folk” idea about the cruelty of the ostrich is Lamentations 4,3. This verse, however, may not refer to ostriches. The *Qere* is עֵנִים but the *Kethib* is עֲנִים and two Qumran manuscripts have עֲנִים. Moreover, some think עֲנִים in Lamentations 4,3 could be translated “Bedouin” or “owls”⁽⁴⁶⁾. Moreover, the Hebrew word used in Lamentations 4,3 for “cruel” is not the same word as in Job 39,16. The cruelty and stupidity of ostriches apparently was not a universal idea in the ANE. In *The Birds of Ancient Egypt*, Houlihan seems unaware of such a tradition, and Bodenheimer notes that the ostrich feather was the hieroglyph for truth and justice⁽⁴⁷⁾. Even if Lamentations 4,3 refers to ostriches, and there was a folk tradition about the cruelty of ostriches, more than one type of bird might be considered cruel for laying its eggs on the ground in the wilderness, so that the passage could be referring to another bird.

The danger here is that impressive, modern folk stories are being read back into an ancient Near Eastern text. The story, originating with Pliny, that the ostrich sticks its head in the sand to avoid discovery⁽⁴⁸⁾ is widely known. The bird that is proverbial in Western culture for its stupidity, may seem to be the common sense choice for a passage that says “God has made her forget wisdom; // He has not given her a share of understanding”⁽⁴⁹⁾. And contemporary commentators often wax poetic about how enigmatic and humorous the ostrich is. Modern folk ideas may have been one of the reasons interpreters seldom questioned the identification of the *hapax* עֲנִים with an ostrich. Interpreters often

⁽⁴⁵⁾ LAUFER, “Ostrich Egg-shell Cups”, 14-15; F. DELITZSCH, *Biblical Commentary on the Book of Job* (Edinburgh 1866) II, 262 who also cites F. ROSENTHAL, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (1952) 254.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (ed. D.J.A. CLINES) (Sheffield 1993-) gives “bedouin” as a possible meaning (IV, 243). *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* lists several authors who think the עֲנִים is a type of owl (L. KOEHLER – W. BAUMGARTNER – J.J. STAMM, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden 1994-1999) II, 421; CANSDALE, *All the Animals*, 190).

⁽⁴⁷⁾ P. HOULIHAN, *The Birds of Ancient Egypt* (Warminster 1986) 1-5; F.S. BODENHEIMER, *Animal and Man in Bible Lands* (Leiden 1960) I, 59.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Pliny referred to the ostrich sticking its head in a bush.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Some think this verse is an addition because a parenthetical reference by God to “Eloah” in the third person is out of place in a speech by God (E.J. KISSANE, *The Book of Job Translated from a Critically Revised Hebrew Text with Commentary* [New York 1946] 277, n. 17; HARTLEY, *Job*, 509, n. 9).

assume or say that the poet lacked modern scientific knowledge but, in this case, modern folk ideas may have blinded them to the biological knowledge of an ancient poet.

By saying in verse 17 the mother bird lacks wisdom, the ancient poet may show a lack of appreciation of the physical and behavioural adaptations of ground-nesting birds, but may not be saying in verse 16 that the mother is “cruel”. Instead, the poet may be referring to the “hardy” or highly precocial chicks of sand grouse and other ground-nesting birds.

IV

Removing the fog created by modern folk tales about ostriches helps clarify the literary connections between the passage and the rest of the animal discourse, the God speeches, and the book of Job.

Commentators often suggest that the running speed of the ostrich forms a literary connection with the next animal in the discourse, the horse. Reference is often made to Xenophon to support this connection. He says that while marching through Arabia, they sometimes chased the wild animals, “but no ostrich was captured by anyone, and any horseman who chased one speedily desisted; for it would distance him at once”⁽⁵⁰⁾. The conclusion drawn is that the ostrich “laughs at the horse and rider” because it can outrun them.

The ostrich’s laugh would be a limited one, however, as riders on horseback hunted and successfully caught them in the ancient world. Aelian says:

Now the capture of this bird is effected by means of horses, for it runs in a circle keeping to the outer edge, but the horsemen intercept it by keeping on the inner side of the circle, and by wheeling in a narrower compass at length overtake it when it is exhausted with running⁽⁵¹⁾.

In addition, ancient Near Eastern iconography shows people hunting ostriches by chariot and even on foot, and keeping ostriches in

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Xenophon, *Anabasis* I–VII (Loeb Classical Library; Harvard – London 1968) I.5.2–3; Cited in J. POLLARD, “Birds in Greek Life and Myth”, *Aspects of Greek and Roman Life* (ed. H.H. SCULLARD) (London 1977) 106.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Aelian, *On the Characteristics of Animals* (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge – Harvard – London 1958) XIV.7; Cited in POLLARD, *Birds in Greek Life*, 106.

captivity⁽⁵²⁾. For instance, in a rock drawing near Silwa Bahari from pre-dynastic times, a man on foot shoots an arrow at an ostrich⁽⁵³⁾. Pictures from dynastic times frequently show pharaohs and noblemen hunting ostriches by chariot and shooting at them in large fenced areas where they had been herded with other desert animals⁽⁵⁴⁾. According to Laufer, early Arab poetry mentions ostrich hunting. He says hunting ostriches on horseback has always been popular with Arabs and describes the same method as Aelian⁽⁵⁵⁾. In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, Meinertzhagen knows of Arabs hunting ostriches on horseback and says they “flew falcons at them, worrying them and checking their pace so that the riders could approach”⁽⁵⁶⁾. The ability of ostriches to run faster than horses would be a limited reason for laughing if they can and were hunted on horseback and kept in captivity. Horses cannot fly and, in this sense, many birds can laugh at the earthbound horse.

Moreover, the passage does not mention the speed of the horse, but its strength and lack of fear. “Do you give to the horse strength? ... it laughs at fear” (Job 39,19-22). Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible the horse is associated with strength (Pss 33,17; 147,10) and, like the bird, lack of understanding (Ps 32,9; cf Prov 26,3; Jer 8,6)⁽⁵⁷⁾. The bird “laughs at the horse and its rider” (39,18); the horse “laughs at fear” (39,22). The bird appears to lack wisdom, because it lays its eggs on the ground where they are vulnerable, but an adult bird can laugh at the horse and its rider because it can fly. The horse laughs at fear because of its strength and, perhaps, because of a lack of understanding similar to that of the bird’s. Both lack wisdom and understanding, but have other talents that allow them laughter. Laughter and fearlessness, not speed, are the literary connection between the רִנִּים and the horse.

Many commentators have noted that the animals in Job 38,39–39,30 are wild or dangerous. What are less often noticed are the

⁽⁵²⁾ HOULIHAN, *Birds of Ancient Egypt*, 1-5; cf. also O. KEEL, *Jahwes Entgegnung an Ijob: Eine Deutung von Ijob 38-41 vor dem Hintergrund der zeitgenössischen Bildkunst* (Göttingen 1978) 72 Abb. 1, 74 Abb. 3, 103-107 Abb. 33-46.

⁽⁵³⁾ HOULIHAN, *Birds of Ancient Egypt*, 3 fig. 2.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ HOULIHAN, *Birds of Ancient Egypt*, 2 fig. 1; 2-3 fig. 3.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ LAUFER, “Ostrich Egg-shell Cups”, 14.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ MEINERTZHAGEN, *Birds of Arabia*, 575.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ The only mention of the speed of horses I could find was in Jer 4,13 and perhaps Jer 12,5 and Hab 1,8.

recurring references to food, habitat, and young. These recurring themes create complex seconding between the strophes of the animal discourse. The passage often mentions the food the animals eat. Carnivores surround herbivores in the passage. The lion eats “prey” (38,39) as does the raven (38,41). The vulture sucks up “blood” from the “slain” (39,30). Sandwiched between these meat eaters are vegetarians. In some cases what they eat is explicitly mentioned. The wild ass eats “green things”. What the wild ox eats is put negatively. It cannot be trusted with Job’s “produce” and “seed”.

The sand grouse passage does not share this emphasis on food, but does share with the other animals a concern for habitat and offspring. Animals that have dens or nests surround animals that wander in search of pasture. The lion has a “den” and lies in a “covert” (38,40). The vulture makes “its nest on high” (39,27), “dwells” on the “rock”, and “makes his home on the fastness of the rocky crag” (39,38). By way of contrast, the mountain goats grow up in the “field”. The wild ass lives in the “wasteland” and the “salt plain” and finds pasture in the “mountains”. The sand grouse that nests on the ground contrasts with lions who have “dens” and are able to defend their young, the hawk whose wings are symbols of protection in the ANE, and the vulture who makes a home “on high” in a “rocky crag”.

This concern with home and food is, in particular, a concern for the care and feeding of young. The content of the first strophe is God’s hunting food for young lions and preparing game for young ravens. The next strophe repeats and elaborates the emphasis on care for young animals with the image of God as midwife at the birth of mountain goats. There is an emphasis on birth and fertility. “Give birth” is repeated three times as well as “calve” and “deliver”. The sand grouse, like the mountain goat and deer, have young who are soon able to look after themselves. The final strophe returns to the motif of food for the young forming an *inclusio* with the first strophe.

The birthing and offspring motif connects the animal discourse with the rest of the God speeches. The first God speech begins with God portrayed as a midwife or parent at the birth of Sea (38,8-11). In the second God speech, God is the “Maker” of Behemoth like Job (40,15.19).

That commentators seldom notice the emphasis on the young is all the more remarkable because it is an only slightly veiled response to Job’s situation. I agree with Newsom that the book of Job is polyphonic and enigmatic. The animal discourse is in this and a

number of other ways, however, an oblique response to Job. The book began with Job losing his oxen, donkeys, sheep, camels, house, and children (Job 1,13-22). In the epilogue, all Job's brothers and sisters come to eat with him in his house (42,11). He again has seven sons and three daughters (42,13), and lives long enough to see his children and "children's children" (42,16). The emphasis on home, food, and offspring in the animal discourse form a literary connection with the prologue of the book of Job. God responds to the loss of Job's children with questions about God's care for the children of many animals that are wild and fearsome to humans.

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In conclusion, correctly identifying the רננים as a sand grouse clarifies the meaning of the Hebrew of the passage and its wider literary connections. Sand grouse have distinctive, musical calls that explain a name with an intensive plural ending whose root in the context refers to a cry of joy. These musical calls combined with strong, acrobatic flight also explain the expression "the wing of the רננים rejoices" (v. 13a). Sand grouse lay their eggs directly on arid, dusty ground (v. 14). When a predator approaches, they forget their own safety and risk being stepped on (v. 15) in order to draw the predator away from the nest. If this fails, the chicks are "hardy" enough to look after themselves "without her" (v. 16). The sudden, noisy flight of adult sand grouse who have relied on their camouflage until the last moment, could startle a horse. Moreover, some of their alarm calls sound like laughter so that, when the sand grouse "soars on high" it might seem to be "laughing at the horse" (v. 18).

Clearing away Western folk tales helps clarify the literary relationship of the pericope to the rest of the animal discourse, the God speeches, and the book of Job. The sand grouse pericope shares with them an emphasis on home and young. The book of Job begins with Job losing his children and ends with the restoration of community and, although it could never replace the first one, a new family. God responds to Job's questions about the justice of the world with an enigmatic portrayal of the sand grouse whose musical calls and strong flight seem joyous, but who appears unkind and unwise as a parent. Yet she risks her life to draw away predators and her young are hardy and independent enough to survive on their own. Although they lack the fearsome power of a horse, sand grouse may startle a horse. Their

laugh-like calls and the ability to soar in the heavens may seem to mock the horse. The world is more enigmatic and complex than Job and his friends had imagined.

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SUMMARY

The so-called ostrich passage (39,13-18) has been much discussed by scholars both because of the difficulties it presents and the importance of its position in the book of Job. Discussions have focused on why an ostrich appears, rather than whether the רִנְיִים is, in fact, an ostrich. Quite a number of Hebrew words and expressions have to be emended or explained to make them fit an ostrich. Moreover, H.-P. Müller has shown that רִנְיִים is not the name for ostrich in Hebrew or any Semitic languages, is not translated “ostrich” in early Greek versions, the Peshitta, or Targums, and the translation “ostrich” probably came from a false identification in early Christian reflection on nature. This article uses contemporary ornithological literature and the information the passage provides on the nest, habitat, behaviours, and calls of the רִנְיִים to identify a more likely type of bird. The identification of the רִנְיִים as a sand grouse helps resolve a number of problems in the text and clarify the literary connections of the passage to the rest of the animal discourse, God speeches, and book of Job.

Estructura testimonial del Evangelio de Juan

El prólogo del 4º Evangelio (Jn 1,1-18) contiene una síntesis teológica de lo que se desarrollará después en forma narrativa⁽¹⁾; representa la puerta obligada para entrar en este escrito⁽²⁾. La obra de la redención, combate entre la luz y la tiniebla (1,5), se decide en la encarnación del Verbo de Dios, que abre a todos los creyentes el acceso como hijos a la vida divina (1,12-14). Se insiste en la misión testimonial de Juan; los dos pasajes que lo mencionan (vv. 6-8.15) presentan al Precursor como un testigo “enviado por Dios” (v. 6). La importancia del testimonio de Juan en el designio divino es grande: por su medio todos han de creer en Jesús (v. 7). Ese testimonio sigue resonando en el Evangelio, tal como leemos en el v. 15: “Juan da testimonio [presente] acerca de él, y sigue gritando [perfecto resultativo]”⁽³⁾; el contenido de su testimonio es, a la luz de este versículo, la preexistencia del Verbo (v. 15b). La figura de Juan introduce por tanto en el prólogo la categoría de testimonio, relevante en toda la obra⁽⁴⁾. En nuestra exposición vamos a mostrar, tras unas consideraciones generales acerca del testimonio en Jn, la función que desempeña en la estructura literaria del Evangelio.

1. Observaciones previas

La importancia del “testimonio” en los escritos joánicos es comúnmente reconocida⁽⁵⁾; se ha llegado a afirmar que el género

⁽¹⁾ “The prologue is necessary to the gospel, as the gospel is necessary to the prologue. The history explicates the theology, and the theology interprets the history”: C.K. BARRETT, *The Prologue of St John's Gospel* (London 1971) 28.

⁽²⁾ “Wie Jesus die einzige „Tür zu den Schafen“ und jeder andere Zugang Gewalttat und Räuberei ist (Joh 10), so ist der Prolog die Tür zum Evangelium”: H. THYEN, “Johannesevangelium”, *TRE* 17 (1988) 221.

⁽³⁾ Así traduce κέκραγεν M. IGLESIAS, *Nuevo Testamento* (Madrid 2003). “Μαρτυρεῖ praes. connotat indefectibilem validitatem huius testimonii, sicut et pf quod sequitur”: M. ZERWICK, *Analysis philologica Novi Testamenti Graeci* (Romae 1984).

⁽⁴⁾ Testimonio (μαρτυρία): Mt 0, Mc 3, Lc 1, Jn 14; testimoniar (μαρτυρέω): Mt 1, Mc 0, Lc 1, Jn 33. Para las estadísticas de vocabulario cf. R. MORGENTHALER, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Zürich – Frankfurt am Main 1958).

⁽⁵⁾ J. BEUTLER, *Martyria*. Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Zeugnisthema bei Johannes (FTS 10; Frankfurt am Main 1972). Cf. J. DANÉLOU,

literario de Jn es el “testimonio”⁽⁶⁾. En dos ocasiones Jesús se refiere a su actividad reveladora como un “dar testimonio” (Jn 3,11; 18,37). La relación de este concepto con otras nociones clave de la teología joánica confirma su relevancia.

a) Testimonio, fe y vida

La fe en Jesús⁽⁷⁾ es una respuesta al testimonio ofrecido en su favor (Jn 1,7; 4,39; 19,35; 1 Jn 5,10)⁽⁸⁾. Por la fe en Jesús se alcanza la vida (3,15)⁽⁹⁾. En 5,39-40, donde la fe se expresa como un “ir hacia Jesús”⁽¹⁰⁾, se manifiesta la conexión entre el testimonio de las Escrituras, la fe en Jesús y la vida. La conclusión del capítulo 20 es palmaria: “Estos [signos] han sido escritos para que creáis que Jesús es el Mesías, el Hijo de Dios, y para que creyendo tengáis vida en su nombre” (20,31). Para tener vida hay que creer en Jesús; y a la fe se llega mediante el testimonio.

b) Testimonio y verdad

Todo testimonio tiene, por su propia naturaleza, pretensión de veracidad⁽¹¹⁾; si no es verdadero se convierte en “falso testimonio”,

Jean-Baptiste, témoin de l'Agneau (Paris 1964) 109-125. Algunos estudios recientes: L. DEVILLERS, “Les trois témoins: une structure pour le quatrième évangile”, *RB* 104 (1997) 40-87; I. DE LA POTTERIE, “Jésus, Témoin de la Vérité et Roi par la Vérité”, *StMiss* 46 (1997) 21-41; M. BIANCHI, “La testimonianza nella tradizione giovannea. Vangelo e lettere”, *Testimonianza e verità*. Un approccio interdisciplinare (ed. P. CIARDELLA – M. GRONCHI) (Collana di Teologia 39; Roma 2000) 119-137; J. CALLOUD, “Quatrième Évangile: le témoignage de Jean”, *SémBib* 100 (2000) 25-49; 103 (2001) 22-55; A.T. LINCOLN, “The Beloved Disciple as Eyewitness and the Fourth Gospel as Witness”, *JSNT* 85 (2002) 3-26. Bibliografía: R. RÁBANOS ESPINOSA – D. MUÑOZ LEÓN, *Bibliografía joánica*. Evangelios, cartas y Apocalipsis 1960-1986 (BHB 14; Madrid 1990) 586-590; G. VAN BELLE, *Johannine Bibliography 1966-1985* (BETL 82; Leuven 1988) 403-404.

(6) K.J. VANHOOZER, “The Hermeneutics of I-Witness Testimony: John 21.20-24 and the ‘Death’ of the ‘Author’”, *Understanding Poets and Prophets*. Essays in Honour of George Wishart Anderson (ed. A.G. AULD) (JSOTSS 152; Sheffield 1993) 378-379. “Le IV^e évangile dans son ensemble se présente comme un témoignage (21,24)”: I. DE LA POTTERIE, *La vérité dans Saint Jean* (AnBib 73; Roma 1999) I, 80.

(7) Creer (πιστεύω): Mt 11, Mc 14, Lc 9, Jn 98.

(8) “Pour Jean, «recevoir le témoignage» et «croire» sont pratiquement synonymes”: DE LA POTTERIE, *La vérité* I, 87.

(9) Vida (ζωή): Mt 7, Mc 4, Lc 5, Jn 36; vivir (ζάω): Mt 6, Mc 3, Lc 9, Jn 17.

(10) Lo indica la sinonimia entre “ir a Jesús” (5,40) y “creer” en él (5,38).

(11) Testimonio: “Prueba, justificación y comprobación de la certeza o verdad de

su perversión⁽¹²⁾. Esto se manifiesta en Jn mediante la conexión semántica entre testimonio y verdad (ἀλήθεια) o verdadero (ἀληθής / ἀληθινός)⁽¹³⁾. “El que acepta su testimonio certifica que Dios es veraz” (Jn 3,33); “otro es el que da testimonio de mí, y yo sé que es verdadero el testimonio que da de mí” (5,32)⁽¹⁴⁾. Tanto Juan (5,33) como Jesús (18,37) dan testimonio de la verdad⁽¹⁵⁾. Esta cualidad caracteriza a todo testimonio auténtico.

c) Testimonio y gloria

El concepto bíblico de “gloria” adquiere una densidad singular en Jn⁽¹⁶⁾; tiene carácter revelador⁽¹⁷⁾ y está en relación con algunos conceptos centrales del 4º Evangelio como la fe y los signos⁽¹⁸⁾; también con el testimonio⁽¹⁹⁾. En 5,31-32 leemos: “Si yo doy

una cosa”: *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (Real Academia Española; Madrid 21992). “Das Zeugnis hat... wesenhaft einen doppelten Ursprung: den Zeugen und in seiner Ursprünglichkeit, ihr voraus, die Wahrheit selbst”: K. HEMMERLE, “Wahrheit und Zeugnis”, *Theologie als Wissenschaft. Methodische Zugänge* (ed. B. CASPER – K. HEMMERLE – P. HÜNERMANN) (QD 45; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1970) 63. Cf. G. SEGALLA, “La testimonianza dei libri del Nuovo Testamento ad un unico kerygma/evangelo, buon annuncio dell’evento originario”, *L’interpretazione della Bibbia nella Chiesa*. Atti del Simposio promosso dalla Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede (Roma, settembre 1999) (Atti e Documenti 11; Città del Vaticano 2001) 304; L. SÁNCHEZ NAVARRO, “The Testimonial Character of Sacred Scripture”, *ICR Communio* 30 (2003) 325-326.

(12) Falso testimonio: “Delito que comete el testigo o perito que declara faltando a la verdad en causa criminal o en actuaciones judiciales de índole civil” (*Diccionario*, s.v. “testimonio”). “La falsa testimonianza è una menzogna nel cuore del testimone”: P. RICOEUR, “L’ermeneutica della testimonianza”, *Testimonianza parola e rivelazione*. Paul Ricoeur (ed. F. FRANCO) (Roma 1997) 83.

(13) Verdad (ἀλήθεια): Mt 1, Mc 3, Lc 3, Jn 25; verdadero (ἀληθής): Mt 1, Mc 1, Lc 0, Jn 14; (ἀληθινός): Mt 0, Mc 0, Lc 1, Jn 9.

(14) Cf. Jn 8,13-14; 19,35; 21,24; 3 Jn 12.

(15) I. DE LA POTTERIE, “Jean-Baptiste et Jésus témoins de la vérité d’après le IV^e évangile”, *Le témoignage* (ed. E. CASTELLI) (Aubier 1972) 317-329.

(16) Gloria (δόξα): Mt 7, Mc 3, Lc 13, Jn 18; glorificar (δοξάζω): Mt 4, Mc 1, Lc 9, Jn 23.

(17) “La révélation de la messianité de Jésus, mais surtout la révélation de sa divine filiation, semble devoir s’identifier à la manifestation de sa gloire”: DE LA POTTERIE, *La vérité* I, 193. Ver C. SKALICKY, *La gloria nel Vangelo di Giovanni* (Roma 1970) 95-100. Ya en el AT es un término de revelación: G. VON RAD, “כבוד kābōd, Ehre im AT”, *TWNT* II, 240-245.

(18) DE LA POTTERIE, *La vérité* I, 192-193.

(19) Lo apreciamos al comparar 5,34 (“pero yo no recibo el testimonio procedente de un hombre [οὐ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου τὴν μαρτυρίαν λαμβάνω]”) y Jn

testimonio acerca de mí mismo, mi testimonio no es verdadero; otro es el que da testimonio acerca de mí, y sé que verdadero es el testimonio que testimonia acerca de mí”; cf. 8,54: “Si yo me glorifico a mí mismo, mi gloria nada es; es mi Padre el que me glorifica...”⁽²⁰⁾. La gloria conlleva en estos casos un testimonio inequívoco acerca de su mesianismo y filiación divina⁽²¹⁾. El misterio pascual será una “glorificación” de Jesús (cf. 7,39; 12,16), manifestando así abiertamente su condición de Hijo de Dios.

d) Conclusión: “testimonio”, concepto clave en Jn

Sirva lo dicho hasta aquí para esbozar la importancia del “testimonio” en el Evangelio de Juan: su relación con los conceptos de fe, vida, verdad y gloria, fundamentales en este Evangelio, lo manifiesta. Pero su importancia no se limita al ámbito conceptual; como vamos a comprobar a continuación, el evangelista se ha servido de esta categoría para estructurar literariamente su obra.

2. Una gran inclusión: Jn 1,19 y 21,24

La narración evangélica, anticipada en el prólogo (1,15), comienza propiamente después del v. 18: “Y este es el testimonio de Juan, cuando le enviaron los judíos desde Jerusalén sacerdotes y levitas para que le preguntaran: «Tú, ¿quién eres?»” (Jn 1,19). A partir de este momento discurre el Evangelio hasta que, ya al final, leemos: “Este es el discípulo que testimonia acerca de esto y el que escribió esto, y sabemos que verdadero es su testimonio” (21,24). El texto griego permite apreciar mejor la semejanza entre los dos versículos, que se circunscribe al comienzo de ambos:

5,41 (“Gloria procedente de hombres no recibo [δόξαν παρὰ ἀνθρώπων οὐ λαμβάνω]”); poco después, en 5,44, la fe aparece como fruto de la búsqueda de la gloria que procede de Dios y no de los hombres. “Jesus nimmt keine Ehre von Menschen entgegen (V. 41), wie er auch kein Zeugnis von Menschen annimmt (V. 34)”: BEUTLER, *Martyria*, 264. En el solemne juicio con que cierra los doce primeros capítulos, el evangelista explica la actitud de quienes creyeron en Jesús pero no lo manifestaron a causa de los fariseos “porque amaron la gloria de los hombres más que la gloria de Dios” (12,43).

⁽²⁰⁾ “Das gegenwärtige „Ehren“ oder „Verherrlichen“ Jesu liegt im Zeugnis des Vaters für ihn, so wie es in 5, 31-47 beschrieben ist”: R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HTKNT IV-2; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1971) II, 296.

⁽²¹⁾ Notemos, para la relación entre gloria y testimonio, que al ciego de nacimiento se exige una declaración veraz acerca de lo sucedido con la fórmula “da gloria a Dios” (9,24).

1,19a: καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ Ἰωάννου
 21,24a: οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μαθητὴς ὁ μαρτυρῶν

Notemos que las dos expresiones están compuestas en paralelismo quiástico; la estructura general de las frases es paralela (οὗτος + εἰμί + suj.), mientras que el quiasmo afecta a ambos sujetos:

αὕτη	ἐστὶν	ἡ μαρτυρία	τοῦ Ἰωάννου
↕	↕	↙ ↘	
οὗτός	ἐστιν	ὁ μαθητὴς	ὁ μαρτυρῶν

Tenemos por tanto dos testigos⁽²²⁾. Por una parte Juan, que se define a sí mismo como “la voz” (1,23), y que como tal da un testimonio oral acerca de Jesús. Por otra parte el discípulo amado, que da un testimonio escrito también sobre Jesús. La semejanza entre estos enunciados resalta si tenemos en cuenta que ningún otro pasaje del Evangelio contiene la expresión “οὗτός ἐστιν” / “αὕτη ἐστὶν” referida a un testimonio o a un testigo⁽²³⁾. Y se hace más llamativa al considerar su contexto, pues ambos versículos pertenecen al marco literario del Evangelio. Jn 1,19 es, como hemos indicado, el comienzo de la narración; esta concluye definitivamente en 21,25. La similitud de las expresiones y su contexto literario clave nos indican, por tanto, que nos hallamos ante una inclusión que abarca el entero Evangelio⁽²⁴⁾. Esta inclusión responde a la importancia que en el prólogo se atribuía al concepto de testimonio, encarnado por Juan. El 4º Evangelio es por tanto un testimonio escrito; a continuación describimos sucintamente su estructura. Pero antes conviene hacer algunas consideraciones relativas a Jn 21 y a 1 Jn.

a) Acerca de Jn 21

Según la visión que proponemos Jn 21 forma parte del plan general del Evangelio. Esto no impide considerarlo un añadido posterior⁽²⁵⁾; en efecto, puede atribuirse la inclusión entre 1,19 y 21,24

⁽²²⁾ Cf. 8,17: “Y en vuestra ley está escrito que el testimonio de dos hombres es verdadero”.

⁽²³⁾ Sólo hallamos giros semejantes en 1 Jn 5,9 (“Porque *este es el testimonio de Dios*: que él ha testimoniado acerca de su Hijo”) y 5,11 (“Y *este es el testimonio*, que Dios nos ha dado vida eterna...”).

⁽²⁴⁾ Acerca de la inclusión como rasgo característico del estilo joánico, ver R.E. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John (I-XII)* (AB 29; Garden City, NY 1966) cxxxv.

⁽²⁵⁾ *Opinio communis*; ver R.E. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John (XIII-XXI)* (AB 29A; Garden City, NY 1970) 1078; R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Das*

a un redactor final. No es nuestra intención entrar en el estudio diacrónico del 4º Evangelio; nos ceñimos al texto canónico tal y como se presenta desde los más antiguos testimonios textuales⁽²⁶⁾. Con todo, no podemos ignorar las voces que desde hace algún tiempo se alzan para sostener el carácter originario de Jn 21⁽²⁷⁾; y es claro que, salvando lo dicho, la estructuración que describimos resulta más coherente si la primera edición de Jn incluía el capítulo 21. Porque la estructura literaria en torno a la categoría de “testimonio” está en relación con la esencia de este Evangelio⁽²⁸⁾.

b) Jn y 1 Jn

El parentesco entre el 4º Evangelio y 1 Jn⁽²⁹⁾ se manifiesta también en la función estructural que desempeña la categoría de “testimonio”. La carta se basa en el anuncio testimonial de “lo que existía desde el principio, lo que hemos oído, lo que hemos visto con nuestros ojos, lo que contemplamos y tocaron nuestras manos acerca de la Palabra de vida” (1 Jn 1,1), tal como afirma el autor en 1 Jn 1,2⁽³⁰⁾. En 1 Jn 4,14

Johannesevangelium (HTKNT IV-3; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1976) III, 406-407; G. MLAKUZHIL, *The Christocentric Literary Structure of the Fourth Gospel* (AnBib 117; Roma 1987) 167; THYEN, “Johannesevangelium”, 204; X. LÉON-DUFOUR, *Lecture de l'évangile selon Jean IV* (Paris 1996) 272-273; K. WENGST, *Das Johannesevangelium* (TKNT 4,1; Stuttgart 2000) I, 30-31.

⁽²⁶⁾ Es de notar que ya P⁶⁶, fechado en torno a 200 d.C., contiene los 9 primeros versículos de Jn 21 a continuación de los versículos finales de Jn 20.

⁽²⁷⁾ U. BUSSE, “Die »Hellenen« Joh 12,20ff. und der sogenannte »Anhang« Joh 21”, *The Four Gospels 1992*. Festschrift Frans Neirynck (ed. F. VAN SEGBROECK) (BETL 102.3; Leuven 1992) 2084 y n. 4; DEVILLERS habla de “réhabilitation de Jn 21” (“Les trois témoins”, 54-56). Cf. G. ØSTENSTAD, “The Structure of the Fourth Gospel: Can it be Defined Objectively?” *ST* 45 (1991) 35; H. THYEN, “Die Erzählung von den bethanischen Geschwistern (Joh 11,1-12,19) als »Palimpsest« über synoptischen Texten”, *The Four Gospels 1992*, 2026; Y. SIMOENS, *Selon Jean*. Une interprétation (IET 17; Bruxelles 1997) 905-907.

⁽²⁸⁾ Cf. *supra* la nota 6.

⁽²⁹⁾ Cf. R.E. BROWN, *The Epistles of John* (AB 30; Garden City, NY 1982) 86-103; R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Die Johannesbriefe* (HTKNT XIII/3; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1984) 34-39; J. BEUTLER, *Die Johannesbriefe* (RNT; Regensburg 2000) 18-20.

⁽³⁰⁾ 1 Jn 1,2: “pues la Vida se manifestó, y nosotros la hemos visto y damos testimonio [μαρτυροῦμεν] y os anunciamos la Vida eterna, que estaba [orientada] hacia el Padre y que se nos manifestó”. “Die Folge der drei Verben in V 2 [bietet] einen starken Anhalt dafür, daß die in 1,1-4 Sprechenden als solche angesehen werden wollen, die das große Heilsereignis unmittelbar geschichtlich miterlebt haben”: SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesbriefe*, 55.

leemos otra solemne afirmación testimonial: “y nosotros hemos visto y damos testimonio de que el Padre envió a su Hijo como Salvador del mundo”. Pero la mayor concentración de terminología testimonial la hallamos en 1 Jn 5,6-12⁽³¹⁾; 5,11 hace señalada referencia a 1,2 (testimonio, vida eterna) y a 1,5⁽³²⁾, de manera que podemos hablar de una gran inclusión que abarca la casi totalidad de la carta⁽³³⁾. Es interesante comparar 1 Jn 5,13 (que sigue a la perícopa centrada en torno al testimonio) con Jn 20,31:

Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰώνιον, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ (1 Jn 5,13).
ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύ[σ]ητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ (Jn 20,31).

Es generalmente reconocida la semejanza entre ambos versículos⁽³⁴⁾. No sólo por los términos comunes (“escribir”, “creer”, “vida”, “en el nombre”): la similitud se manifiesta también en la estructura global de la frase (“esto... [escrito] para que...”)⁽³⁵⁾. Este dato literario hace más profunda la semejanza entre Jn y 1 Jn. En efecto, 1 Jn 5,13 es un versículo conclusivo⁽³⁶⁾; pero la carta no concluye más que en 5,21. Algo semejante a lo que sucede en el 4º Evangelio con Jn 20,31⁽³⁷⁾. Además, tanto la conclusión definitiva de Jn como la de 1 Jn giran en torno al concepto de verdad⁽³⁸⁾. Si

⁽³¹⁾ μαρτυρέω: vv. 6, 7, 9, 10; μαρτυρία: vv. 9 (3), 10 (2), 11.

⁽³²⁾ 1,5: Καὶ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ ἀγγελία...; 5,11: Καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία...

⁽³³⁾ “I John began with a testimony that eternal life was revealed; it is not illogical that the reception of eternal life be seen as the final testimony”: BROWN, *Epistles*, 591.

⁽³⁴⁾ Cf. BROWN, *Epistles*, 594.

⁽³⁵⁾ Notemos que son los dos únicos versículos de la Biblia griega en que aparecen reunidos los términos γράφω (escribir), πιστεύω (creer) y ζωή (vida).

⁽³⁶⁾ “The epistle is thus rounded off, and the author appears to have intended to wind it up with the brief summary of his purpose in verse 13, recalling as it does the words with which the Fourth Gospel was apparently at first intended to close... As a literary whole, the epistle must be held to be complete here. The rest is postscript”: C.H. DODD, *The Johannine Epistles* (London 1946) 133. Cf. BEUTLER, *Johannesbriefe*, 124. Contra BROWN, *Epistles*, 630-631.

⁽³⁷⁾ También el Apocalipsis presenta un fenómeno semejante: tras 22,7 — que forma inclusión con 1,3 — el discurso se extiende hasta 22,21. Acerca de la extensión e importancia del epílogo en el Apocalipsis ver U. VANNI, *La struttura letteraria dell'Apocalisse* (Aloisiana 8a; Brescia 1980) 109-114.

⁽³⁸⁾ Jn 21,24: “... y sabemos que su testimonio es verdadero [ἀληθής]”; 1 Jn 5,20: “Sabemos que el Hijo de Dios ha venido y nos ha dado inteligencia para que

ponemos en relación estas consideraciones con cuanto indicábamos en el punto anterior acerca de Jn 21, resulta razonable postular que en el plan originario Jn 20,31 no es la última conclusión del Evangelio; es coherente con el estilo joánico poner un versículo que apunta a la conclusión cuando el discurso aún no está completamente cerrado⁽³⁹⁾. Esto sucede cuando se afirma la verdad de lo contenido en el escrito, de acuerdo con su naturaleza testimonial.

Tras estas observaciones de carácter literario que manifiestan una semejanza de fondo entre Jn y 1 Jn, y que por lo tanto permiten concebir sus características peculiares⁽⁴⁰⁾ como rasgos comunes, pasamos a describir el plan del 4º Evangelio⁽⁴¹⁾.

3. *El testimonio de Juan (1,19 → 10,42)*

Cuanto hemos observado en el apartado anterior acerca de 1 Jn resulta iluminador, también, para delimitar la primera gran parte del 4º Evangelio. Es propio concluir un testimonio afirmando su veracidad. Lo hace 1 Jn; y lo hace también el evangelista respecto del testimonio de Juan, que abarca hasta 10,42. En 10,41 leemos: “Y muchos fueron hacia él [Jesús], y decían: «Juan no hizo ningún signo, pero todo lo que Juan dijo acerca de este era verdad [ἀληθὴ ἦν]»”. La alusión a Juan en este momento de la narración es tanto más llamativa cuanto que ha desaparecido de escena al final del capítulo 3, con unas palabras significativas: “él tiene que crecer, y yo tengo que disminuir” (3,30). El hecho no ha pasado desapercibido; ya R.E. Brown proponía ver en Jn 10,40-42 el primitivo final del ministerio público de Jesús⁽⁴²⁾.

conozcamos al Verdadero [ἀληθινός], y estamos en el Verdadero, en su Hijo Jesucristo. Este es el Dios Verdadero y la vida eterna”. Cf. Ap 22,6.

⁽³⁹⁾ De hecho la conclusión se anticipa ya en 19,35. Este versículo está emparentado con las dos conclusiones posteriores: 20,31 (“...para que también vosotros creáis”) y 21,24 (“...y verdadero es su testimonio”). La relación literaria entre 19,35 y 20,31 es tal, que los manuscritos comparten incluso la vacilación entre πιστεύετε y πιστεύετε; el aparato crítico de ²⁷NESLITE-ALAND (que edita πιστεύ[σ]ετε) permite comprobar que los testimonios textuales mantienen coherentemente en ambos pasajes una u otra lectura.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ A saber: a) Gran inclusión mediante la categoría de “testimonio”. b) Primera conclusión, no definitiva, cerca del final del discurso. c) Alusión final a la “verdad”.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Una panorámica de las estructuras propuestas, en MLAKUZHIL, *Christocentric Structure*, 17-85.

⁽⁴²⁾ “... we suggest that at one time the Johannine sketch of the public ministry came to a conclusion with x 40-42. (...) Before chs. xi-xii were added to

La mención de Juan al final del capítulo 10 sirve para concluir literariamente su testimonio⁽⁴³⁾. Lo confirman dos datos, que se añaden al ya indicado de la declaración de veracidad. En primer lugar, la referencia de 10,40 a 1,28, versículo con el que forma una inclusión⁽⁴⁴⁾; tenemos por tanto un indicio literario que delimita la sección. En segundo lugar, el contenido del testimonio de Juan. Este encuentra su formulación solemne en 1,34: “Y yo he visto y he dado testimonio de que este es el Hijo de Dios”⁽⁴⁵⁾. Pues bien: la conclusión de esta unidad literaria (10,40-42) llega inmediatamente después del episodio en que Jesús, en controversia con los judíos, afirma ser Hijo de Dios (10,34-39), explicando así su audaz declaración en 10,30 (“yo y el Padre somos una sola cosa”). Merece la pena transcribir el entero pasaje:

³⁴ Les respondió Jesús: “¿No está escrito en vuestra ley: Yo dije: sois dioses? ³⁵ Si llamó dioses a aquellos a quienes se dirigió la palabra de Dios — y la Escritura no puede ser abolida —, ³⁶ al que el Padre consagró y envió al mundo, ¿vosotros le decís: «Blasfemas», porque dije: «soy Hijo de Dios»? ³⁷ Si no hago las obras de mi Padre, no me creáis; ³⁸ pero si las hago, aunque no me creáis, creed a las obras, para que sepáis y comprendáis que en mí [está] el Padre y yo [estoy] en el Padre”. ³⁹ Pretendieron de nuevo apresarle, pero él salió de entre sus manos (Jn 10,34-39).

El evangelista da por concluida esta sección cuando Jesús se ha manifestado como Hijo de Dios, no sólo a sus discípulos (Natanael lo

the gospel outline, we suggest that x 40-42 was followed by the opening of the Book of Glory in ch. xiii”: BROWN, *John I*, 414. H. THYEN sitúa “die große Zäsur” del Evangelio entre Jn 10 y Jn 11: “Die Erzählung von den bethanischen Geschwistern”, 2026.

⁽⁴³⁾ ØSTENSTAD, “Structure”, 43-44.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ BROWN, *John I*, 414; H. THYEN, “Johannes 10 im Kontext des vierten Evangeliums”, *The Shepherd Discourse of John 10 and its Context* (ed. J. BEUTLER – R.T. FORTNA) (SNTSMS 67; Cambridge 1991) 123-124; DEVILLERS, “Les trois témoins”, 63. “Die Gegenüberstellung mit Johannes dem Täufer bringt nochmals dessen Zeugnis für Jesus in Erinnerung”: SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium II*, 394.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Así ²⁷NESTLE-ALAND. El Sinaítico y diversas versiones antiguas leen “el elegido [ἐκλεκτός] de Dios”, variante que prefieren algunos autores; cf. R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HTKNT IV-1; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1965) I, 305; BROWN, *John I*, 57. “On the basis of age and diversity of witnesses a majority of the [GNT] Committee preferred the reading ὁ υἱός, which is also in harmony with the theological terminology of the Fourth Gospel”: B.M. METZGER, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart ²1994) 172.

ha confesado como tal en 1,49), sino también a los judíos (10,36)⁽⁴⁶⁾. La unidad literaria culmina por tanto en estas palabras, que confirman el solemne testimonio de Juan (1,34); un momento importante dentro de esta unidad lo representa 8,58, cuando Jesús manifiesta ante los judíos su preexistencia (“antes de que comenzara a existir Abraham, yo soy”) y ratifica así el primer testimonio de Juan acerca de él (1,15.30). Notemos que la manifestación de Jesús como Hijo de Dios tiene notable importancia para la narración pues marca el comienzo de la persecución de los judíos (5,18), que recurrirán a este argumento para solicitar su condena a muerte (19,7).

Entre las confesiones de fe en Jesús contenidas en estos capítulos⁽⁴⁷⁾ destacan los testimonios: el de Juan, del que ya hemos hablado y que será evocado por Jesús en el centro de esta sección⁽⁴⁸⁾; el de las obras; y el de la Escritura⁽⁴⁹⁾. Nos centramos ahora en los dos últimos, que hallamos en 5,31-40:

1) El testimonio de las obras a favor de Jesús es mayor que el de Juan (5,36a) porque no procede de un hombre, sino del Padre: “las obras que me ha dado el Padre para que las cumpla, estas obras que hago dan testimonio acerca de mí de que el Padre me ha enviado” (5,36b). Las obras — los “signos”, en torno a los cuales gravita toda esta primera sección — no son tuyas, sino del Padre. El testimonio de las obras se reconduce, pues, al testimonio del Padre: por medio de ellas el Padre convalida el testimonio de Jesús acerca de sí mismo (5,31-32; 8,18). Al final del cap. 10 Jesús recogerá con insistencia esta idea (10,25.32.37-38), que explica la relevancia atribuida por el 4º Evangelio a sus signos.

2) El testimonio de la Escritura también apunta a Jesús: “escrutáis las Escrituras, porque vosotros pensáis tener en ellas vida eterna; y ellas son las que dan testimonio acerca de mí” (5,39). La fe en las Escrituras conduce a la fe en Jesús: “si creyerais a Moisés, me creeríais también a mí; pues acerca de mí escribió él” (5,46; cf. 1,45). La

⁽⁴⁶⁾ La importancia de Jn 10,22-39 en el plan general del Evangelio ha sido subrayada por E.A. WYLLER, “In Solomon’s Porch: A Henological Analysis of the Architectonic of the Fourth Gospel”, *ST* 42 (1988) 151-167.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Los primeros discípulos (Andrés: 1,41; Felipe: 1,45; Natanael: 1,49); la samaritana (4,29) y los samaritanos (4,42); la gente tras la multiplicación de los panes (6,14) y en la fiesta de los Tabernáculos (7,40-41); Pedro (6,69); el ciego de nacimiento (9,17.33).

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Jn 5,33: “Vosotros habéis enviado [mensajeros] a Juan, y él ha dado testimonio de la verdad”.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ A estos hay que añadir el de la samaritana (4,39).

Escritura — que en palabras de Jesús “no puede ser abolida” (10,35) — procede de Dios, tal como manifiesta 1,17⁽⁵⁰⁾. De modo que el testimonio de la Escritura acerca de Jesús remite también al Padre. Notemos que este testimonio de la Escritura es recogido al final del cap. 10, ya que en ella fundamenta Jesús la afirmación de su filiación divina (10,34-35).

Los dos grandes testimonios que confirman el testimonio de Juan en esta primera sección del Evangelio, el de las obras de Jesús y el de la Escritura, no son por tanto sino testimonios indirectos del Padre en favor de Jesús. Notemos que también el testimonio de Juan (1,34) procede del Padre: desde el principio del Evangelio se manifiesta su condición de enviado de Dios (1,6), siendo él quien le ha dado a conocer a Jesús (1,33)⁽⁵¹⁾. Estos tres testimonios confluyen al final del cap. 10, con el que se cierra la primera sección narrativa del Evangelio: “y muchos creyeron en él allí” (10,42).

4. *El testimonio del discípulo amado (13,1 → 21,25)*

Jn 13,1 representa una cesura en el Evangelio; este hecho comúnmente aceptado queda de manifiesto, no sólo en el carácter solemne de este versículo, sino también en la no menos solemne conclusión que lo precede (12,37-50). A partir de este momento hay además una fuerte unidad temática, ya que los capítulos 13-21 de Jn centran su atención en el misterio pascual de Jesús.

En ellos aparece una figura anónima, “el discípulo al que Jesús amaba”; será testigo privilegiado de la cena (13,23), de la pasión (19,26) y de la resurrección (21,7.20) de Jesús. Es asimismo el primero en recibir el anuncio de la tumba vacía (junto con Pedro: 20,2) y en creer en la resurrección (20,8-9). La importancia del personaje en esta sección es subrayada poco antes del final: “Volviéndose, Pedro ve al discípulo al que amaba Jesús siguiéndolo, aquel que se había reclinado en la cena sobre el pecho de Jesús y había dicho: «Señor, ¿quién es el que te va a entregar?»” (21,20). La referencia a la primera mención del discípulo amado (13,23-25), innecesaria en realidad para identificarlo, se explica si vemos en 21,20 una alusión intencionada a ese pasaje⁽⁵²⁾.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ En 1,17 el aoristo ἔδόθη “fue dada”, referido a la ley, hay que entenderlo como un pasivo divino. “The Law was a gift”: BROWN, *John I*, 4.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Cf. SKALICKY, *La gloria*, 104.

⁽⁵²⁾ “L’inclusion formée par 13, 23-25 et 21, 20 soude donc l’ensemble des neuf derniers chapitres”: DEVILLERS, “Les trois témoins”, 66.

Pero 21,20 remite además a 13,2 (“en la cena”)⁽⁵³⁾, de modo que el “recordatorio parentético” de 21,20 refuerza doblemente la unidad de esta sección, mencionando además a uno de sus personajes más característicos⁽⁵⁴⁾. Este discípulo está en el origen de la tradición joánica: es “el discípulo que testimonia acerca de esto y el que escribió esto” (21,24)⁽⁵⁵⁾. Los capítulos 13-21 contienen de forma señalada su testimonio.

En esta gran sección, donde el vocabulario testimonial es menos frecuente que en 1-10⁽⁵⁶⁾, destacan dos testimonios: el del Espíritu y el del discípulo amado.

1) El testimonio del Espíritu acerca de Jesús permitirá que los discípulos, privados visiblemente de su maestro, permanezcan sin embargo en el aprendizaje de Jesús y sean capaces a su vez de dar testimonio: “cuando llegue el Paráclito que yo os enviaré de parte del Padre, el Espíritu de la verdad que procede del Padre, él testimoniará acerca de mí; y también vosotros testimoniáis, porque desde el principio estáis conmigo” (Jn 15,26-27)⁽⁵⁷⁾. El Espíritu es un tema principal en el discurso de la cena. Se le nombra por vez primera en 14,17 como “el Espíritu de la verdad”, y después en 14,26 como “paráclito” y “Espíritu Santo”; en este último versículo Jesús indica su futura misión: “él os enseñará todo y os recordará todo lo que yo os dije”. A estos dos versículos remite 15,26; el testimonio interior del “Espíritu de la verdad” acerca de Jesús prolonga la enseñanza de Jesús a sus discípulos. En 16,7-11 reaparece el Espíritu, cuya misión

⁽⁵³⁾ El sustantivo δέιπνον aparece sólo — además de 12,2 — en 13,2.4 y 21,20.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ “This reference [21,20] is a mosaic from xiii 2 (...); xiii 21 (...); and especially xiii 25 (...). Parenthetical reminders are very Johannine”: BROWN, *John* II, 1109.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ Una revista de las identificaciones propuestas, en J.H. CHARLESWORTH, *The Beloved Disciple. Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge, PA 1995) 127-224; este autor propone ver en el discípulo amado a Tomás el Mellizo (436). Pero los argumentos a favor de Juan el hijo de Zebedeo conservan su valor: D. MUÑOZ LEÓN, “¿Es el Apóstol Juan el Discípulo Amado?” *EstBib* 45 (1987) 403-492; M. RESE, “Das Selbstzeugnis des Johannesevangeliums über seinen Verfasser”, *ETL* 72 (1996) 75-111; J.A. CABALLERO, “El discípulo amado en el Evangelio de Juan”, *EstBib* 60 (2002) 311-336; H. CAZELLES, “Johannes. Ein Sohn des Zebedäus, ‘Priester’ und Apostel”, *Communio* 31 (2002) 479-484.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ En 1,19-10,42 μαρτυρέω aparece 22 veces y μαρτυρία 11; en 13-21 hallamos el verbo 7 veces, y el sustantivo sólo en dos ocasiones.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Ver DE LA POTTERIE, *La vérité* I, 395-396.

consistirá en convencer al mundo “acerca del pecado, de la justicia y del juicio”; el verbo ἐλέγχω “convencer” equivale aquí a “declarar culpable”, en sentido jurídico⁽⁵⁸⁾. En 16,12-15 Jesús anuncia de nuevo que “el Espíritu de la verdad os guiará en toda verdad” (v. 13), y prosigue: “él me glorificará, porque tomará de lo mío y os lo anunciará” (v. 14). De modo que el Espíritu que dará testimonio acerca de Jesús (15,26) lo glorificará (16,14), prosiguiendo su obra en los discípulos. Notemos por último que este testimonio tiene su origen en el Padre, pues de él procede el Espíritu de la verdad (15,26).

2) El testimonio del discípulo amado aparece en dos momentos particularmente solemnes: 19,35 y 21,24⁽⁵⁹⁾. El hecho de que esta figura anónima caracterice con su presencia los nueve capítulos finales del Evangelio confiere a las dos declaraciones del evangelista una densidad especial. Desde su primera aparición (13,23-25) el discípulo amado goza de una intimidad con Jesús que le confiere una relevancia singular en el grupo. Además está presente a lo largo de toda la narración. Algunos comentaristas tienden a identificarlo con el “otro discípulo” que acompañaba a Pedro durante la pasión (18,15-16)⁽⁶⁰⁾; hipótesis razonable, dado que permanecerá al pie de la cruz junto a la madre de Jesús (19,26) y está en relación peculiar con Pedro, junto a quien aparece en la cena (13,24), en la mañana de resurrección (20,2-9), en la pesca milagrosa (21,7) y en la última escena del Evangelio (21,20-22). Por todo ello el testimonio del discípulo amado reviste una importancia capital. Es testigo presencial de cuanto escribe (19,35); y es el autor del Evangelio (21,24), de modo que su palabra escrita da fe de cuanto en él se contiene. En este sentido, el testimonio del discípulo amado incluye el testimonio de Juan (Jn 1-10), hace posible su transmisión y manifiesta su eficacia⁽⁶¹⁾.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Cf. Jn 8,46: “¿Quién de vosotros me declara culpable acerca de pecado [ἐλέγχει με περὶ ἁμαρτίας]?”

⁽⁵⁹⁾ El personaje de 19,35 es anónimo: “el que ha visto” (ὁ ὥρακώς). Pero se trata con gran probabilidad del discípulo amado, presente en el calvario (19,26-27); esta hipótesis se afianza a la luz de 21,24-25. “Même si la tournure est anonyme, il ne peut s’agir que du disciple bien-aimé” : LÉON-DUFOUR, *Jean IV*, 165. Ver BROWN, *John II*, 936; SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium III*, 340.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ BROWN, *John I*, xciv; THYEN, “Johannesevangelium”, 213; M. HENGEL, *Die johanneische Frage. Ein Lösungsversuch* (WUNT 67; Tübingen 1993) 216; LÉON-DUFOUR, *Jean IV*, 55-56. *Contra* SCHNACKENBURG, *Johannesevangelium III*, 266.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Algunos autores proponen ver en el discípulo amado al discípulo anónimo de Juan mencionado en Jn 1,35-40. Cf. C.H. GIBLIN, “The Tripartite Narrative

Los nueve capítulos finales de Jn constituyen por tanto desde el punto de vista literario una sólida unidad, reforzada por una correspondencia literaria (13,2.23-25 → 21,20) y caracterizada por la presencia del discípulo amado, testigo privilegiado de las últimas horas de Jesús, de su pasión, muerte y resurrección. En la primera sección (1,19-10,42) tenía una importancia especial el testimonio de las Escrituras, que remite al pasado, al tiempo de la antigua Alianza — como, por lo demás, la misma figura del Bautista; de forma semejante, en el testimonio del discípulo amado (13,1-21,25)⁽⁶²⁾ destaca la actividad testimonial del Espíritu, que remite al futuro, al tiempo de la Iglesia. Todos estos testimonios convergen en Jesús⁽⁶³⁾.

5. En el centro: el testimonio del Padre (11,1 → 12,50)

En Jn 11-12 aparece un nuevo personaje, Lázaro de Betania, amigo de Jesús; su presencia se circunscribe a estos dos capítulos⁽⁶⁴⁾. La resurrección de Lázaro, 7º signo de Jesús, será la causa definitiva de su condena a muerte (11,47-50; cf. 12,19). Jn 11-12 se presenta por tanto como una unidad distinta de cuanto precede (recordamos el carácter conclusivo de 10,40-42) y sigue (en 13,1 comienza, tal como hemos indicado, una nueva sección).

Los dos capítulos centrales del 4º Evangelio constituyen una sección puente entre la vida pública de Jesús y la pasión⁽⁶⁵⁾. Pertenecen aún a la primera, que concluirá sólo en 12,50 tras la resurrección de Lázaro (11,44) y la entrada en Jerusalén (12,9-19), cumbre de su ministerio público⁽⁶⁶⁾. Pero notemos que en Jn 11-12 se prolonga una actividad que Jesús había ya concluido en 10,42 ante una

Structure of John's Gospel", *Bib* 71 (1990) 459 ("quite probably"); THYEN, "Die Erzählung von den bethanischen Geschwistern", 2046-2047 ("er muß... sein"); HENGEL, *Die johanneische Frage*, 216-217; RESE, "Das Selbstzeugnis", 101.

⁽⁶²⁾ Que, puesto por escrito (ὁ γράψας ταῦτα: 21,24), se convierte a su vez en Escritura.

⁽⁶³⁾ "La grande nouveauté du témoignage johannique, c'est qu'il est entièrement *centré sur la personne même du Christ* : les différents témoignages rendus à Jésus visent tous à nous faire découvrir en lui le Messie et le Fils de Dieu": DE LA POTTERIE, *La vérité* I, 88. Cf. BIANCHI, "La testimonianza", 128-129.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Jn 11,1.2.5.11.14.43; 12,1.2.9.10.17. No aparece en los Sinópticos.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ "Bridge-Section": MŁAKUZYIL, *Christocentric Structure*, 217.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ La retirada de Jesús de la vida pública se produce gradualmente: "De manera que Jesús ya no caminaba abiertamente entre los judíos, sino que se fue de allí a la región cerca del desierto..." (11,54); "Esto dijo Jesús, y marchándose se ocultó de ellos" (12,37).

hostilidad siempre creciente; la resistencia de los discípulos a dejar que Jesús vaya a Judea (11,8) pone de manifiesto el elevado riesgo que una nueva actividad pública ha de suponer para él. A la vez Jn 11-12 preludia la pasión, ya inminente⁽⁶⁷⁾. Distinguimos, por tanto, estos capítulos del resto del Evangelio; pero notamos que tienen elementos en común tanto con la primera gran sección como con la última. A la manera de una gran bisagra, las une y sostiene.

Como indicamos en el título de este párrafo, Jn 11-12 contiene el testimonio del Padre (cf. 5,37)⁽⁶⁸⁾. Pero este no es equiparable a los anteriores⁽⁶⁹⁾: el testimonio del Padre se realiza mediante la glorificación del Hijo⁽⁷⁰⁾. Y se produce en dos momentos:

1) La resurrección de Lázaro es el último signo (σημεῖον: 12,18) de Jesús. Ya sabemos que las obras prodigiosas de Jesús no proceden de él, sino del Padre (5,36): son “signos”, remiten a una realidad que los trasciende. Pues bien: el signo supremo de Jesús aparece en relación especial con el Padre, ya que a diferencia de los signos anteriores Jesús ora antes de realizarlo⁽⁷¹⁾. En esta plegaria de acción

⁽⁶⁷⁾ 11,50-51 (profecía de Caifás); 12,1 (“seis días antes de la Pascua”); 12,4 (traición de Judas); 12,7 (sepultura de Jesús); 12,24 (alegoría del grano de trigo); 12,32 (ser elevado sobre la tierra); 12,33 (“esto lo dijo indicando de qué muerte iba a morir”).

⁽⁶⁸⁾ DEVILLERS estructura el 4º Evangelio en torno a tres testigos: Juan (1-10), el discípulo amado (13-21) y Lázaro (11-12). Lázaro sería un “testimonio vivo” de Jesús (“Les trois témoins”, 68), mudo mas no por ello menos eficaz; frente al testimonio de Juan (palabra oral) y al del discípulo amado (palabra escrita) representaría el *testimonio de la vida* (“Les trois témoins”, 77). Pensamos que Lázaro puede ser considerado un testigo de Jesús en sentido amplio: su resurrección, 7º signo, representa como tal un testimonio a favor de Jesús (cf. 5,36; 10,25). Pero no se puede hablar de Lázaro como testigo en sentido estricto. El testimonio, concepto forense (RICOEUR, “L’ermeneutica della testimonianza”, 78), requiere la palabra. “Il testimone rende testimonianza dicendo, o ri-dicendo, ciò di cui ha fatto esperienza. La parola, il linguaggio inteso in una particolare accezione, è insomma il medio nel quale la testimonianza si attua”: A. FABRIS, “Per una filosofia della testimonianza”, *Testimonianza e verità. Un approccio interdisciplinare* (ed. P. CIARDELLA – M. GRONCHI) (Collana di Teologia 39; Roma 2000) 59.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ De hecho μαρτυρέω sólo aparece en 12,17, predicado de la multitud; y μαρτυρία está ausente.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Recordamos la relación, ya mencionada, entre los conceptos de gloria y testimonio en Jn.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Cf. 9,31: “Sabemos que Dios no escucha a los pecadores; mas, si uno es temeroso de Dios y cumple su voluntad, a ése le escucha”. “Les gestes de Jésus sont la conclusion d’une prière, le miracle est la réponse de Dieu à cette prière”: A. VANHOYE, “Témoignage et vie en Dieu selon le 4º Évangile”, *Christus* 6 (1955) 154-155.

de gracias (11,41-42) Jesús pone de manifiesto el valor que tendrá este signo para la fe de cuantos lo contemplan. Con este prodigio, por tanto, el Padre dará un testimonio singular de la condición de Jesús como Enviado (11,42). Jesús había anunciado antes de bajar a Betania: “esta enfermedad no es de muerte sino para la gloria de Dios, para que sea glorificado el Hijo de Dios por medio de ella” (11,4). Si el primer signo manifestó la gloria de Jesús ante los discípulos (2,11), el último la manifestará ante una multitud de judíos (11,42) que, a la vista del milagro, creerán en Jesús (11,45).

2) El testimonio del Padre no se limita al signo, sino que se expresa verbalmente. Cuando los griegos desean verlo (12,23), Jesús ora: “Padre, glorifica tu Nombre” (12,28a)⁽⁷²⁾. A ello responde una voz desde el cielo: “lo glorifiqué y lo glorificaré” (12,28b). Son las únicas palabras del Padre en el 4º Evangelio⁽⁷³⁾; su importancia queda subrayada por la reacción de quienes las escuchan (12,29) y por la declaración de Jesús acerca de su finalidad: “no por mí [δὲ ἐμὲ] se ha producido esta voz, sino por vosotros [δὲ ὑμᾶς]” (12,30)⁽⁷⁴⁾. La voz del Padre representa el testimonio supremo a favor de Jesús. El Padre atestigua acerca de su Hijo a lo largo del Evangelio, pero siempre de forma mediata (testimonio de Juan, de la Escritura, de las obras, del Espíritu); sólo en este momento el Padre formula directamente unas palabras decisivas que marcan el ministerio terreno de su Hijo con el sello divino (cf. 6,27)⁽⁷⁵⁾. Emplea para ello un concepto clave en Jn:

⁽⁷²⁾ Ese Nombre es el Nombre divino, que el Padre ha dado al Hijo (17,11-12) y que el Hijo ha dado a conocer (17,26); por ello glorificación del Nombre y glorificación del Hijo son inseparables. “The name that the Father has entrusted to Jesus... can only be glorified when its bearer is glorified through death, resurrection, and ascension”: BROWN, *John* I, 477. Algunos manuscritos tardíos leen “glorifica a tu Hijo”, influidos por 17,1. El códice de Beza combina 12,28 con 17,5: “glorifica tu nombre con la gloria que yo tenía junto a ti antes de que el mundo existiera”. Estas variantes textuales atestiguan la inseparabilidad entre “glorificar el Nombre” divino y “glorificar al Hijo”.

⁽⁷³⁾ En el Bautismo, y a diferencia de los sinópticos, las palabras divinas eran referidas por Juan, y no proferidas directamente por el Padre (Jn 1,33).

⁽⁷⁴⁾ En el capítulo anterior Jesús indica que la finalidad de la resurrección de Lázaro es que los discípulos crean: “y me alegro por vosotros [δὲ ὑμᾶς] de no haber estado allí, para que creáis” (Jn 11,15).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Por su importancia son equiparables a la voz divina que en los sinópticos declara la complacencia del Padre en Jesús, en el Bautismo (Mt 3,17 || Mc 1,11 || Lc 3,22) y en la Transfiguración (Mt 17,5 || Mc 9,7 || Lc 9,35). Cf. L. SÁNCHEZ NAVARRO, “Complacencia y deseo del Padre”, *EstBib* 60 (2002) 31-42. Acerca de este pasaje del 4º Evangelio cf. H.J. LEE, “Signore vogliamo vedere Gesù”. La

“glorificar”, referido al pasado (vida pública, signos) y al futuro (misterio pascual)⁽⁷⁶⁾. Igual que con los signos el Padre ha dado un testimonio a favor de Jesús (ha “glorificado su Nombre”), su “elevación” (3,14; 8,28; 12,32), esto es, su pasión y resurrección confirmará ese testimonio de forma definitiva (“lo glorificaré”)⁽⁷⁷⁾.

Los dos capítulos centrales representan por tanto un momento culminante del 4º Evangelio; esta unidad literaria une las secciones inicial (Jn 1-10) y conclusiva (Jn 13-21), y a la vez manifiesta su sentido último. En Jn 12,28 el Padre garantiza el origen divino de la obra de Jesús; en la conclusión del cap. 12 Jesús manifestará su sumisión a la voluntad del Padre, confirmando la unidad del testimonio: “Lo que yo hablo, tal como me ha dicho el Padre, así lo hablo” (12,50). En Jn 1-10 y 13-21 hallamos diversos testimonios convergentes a favor de Jesús⁽⁷⁸⁾, que tienen en el Padre su origen. Los capítulos centrales (11-12) contienen el testimonio solemne del Padre, que declara la glorificación en Jesús del Nombre divino.

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El 4º Evangelio se presenta como un largo testimonio a favor de Jesús Mesías e Hijo de Dios; este testimonio, anticipado en el prólogo (1,6-8.15), queda delimitado por la inclusión entre 1,19 — comienzo de la narración — y 21,24 — conclusión de la misma. Su estructura testimonial tiene por tanto significado cristológico. Todo el Evangelio es un testimonio escrito del discípulo amado (21,24). Pero a su vez contiene un testimonio múltiple, articulado en torno a dos figuras principales: Juan (1,19 → 10,42) y el discípulo amado (13,1 → 21,25). En la unidad central (11,1 → 12,50), vínculo entre ambas secciones, el Padre mismo, origen de los diversos testimonios sobre Jesús, testifica a favor de su Hijo mediante un hecho (la resurrección de Lázaro: 11,41-44) y unas palabras que lo ilustran y anuncian una glorificación

conclusioni dell'attività pubblica di Gesù secondo Gv 12,20-36 (TG-SP 124; Roma 2005).

(76) “Lors de la Cène, la perspective établie par ce dialogue sera d’abord brièvement évoquée au moment crucial de la sortie de Judas [13,31-32], puis développée dans toutes ses implications par la prière sacerdotale qui précède immédiatement le récit de la Passion”: VANHOYE, “Témoignage”, 155.

(77) “La glorification finale de Jésus constitue le signe divin par excellence, le point culminant du témoignage du Père”: VANHOYE, “Témoignage”, 155.

(78) Cf. BEUTLER, *Martyria*, 237-306 (“Die verschiedenen Zeugen für Christus und deren traditionsgeschichtlicher Hintergrund”).

definitiva — la pasión y resurrección (12,28). De modo que podemos presentar la estructura literaria de este Evangelio como sigue:

Prólogo (1,1-18)

El testimonio de Juan (1,19 → 10,42)

El testimonio del Padre (11,1 → 12,50)

El testimonio del discípulo amado (13,1 → 21,25)

Nos hallamos por tanto ante un tríptico testimonial, precedido y anticipado por el prólogo. En este “tríptico” dos hombres, Juan y el discípulo amado, dan un testimonio verdadero acerca de Jesús (10,41; 21,24; cf. 8,17). Su doble testimonio enmarca la sección central del Evangelio; en ella, más breve que las otras dos, hallamos el testimonio del Padre (cf. 8,18), que apunta a la glorificación de su Hijo. En este marco literario y teológico se narran la vida, muerte y resurrección del Verbo encarnado (cf. 1,14).

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SUMMARY

Following the Prologue (John 1,1-18), the Gospel of John is demarcated by an inclusio which extends from 1,19 (“And this is the witness of John”) to 21,24 (“This is the disciple who bears witness”). This Gospel contains a multiple witness to Jesus as Messiah and as Son of God (cf. 20,31), organized around two main characters: John (1,19 → 10,42) and the beloved disciple (13,1 → 21,25). In the central unit (11, → 12,50), which serves as a link between the two sections, the Father intervenes by rising up Lazarus (11,41-44) and makes His own voice heard from heaven (12,28); through these events the Father bears the supreme witness to Jesus. In this way, the Gospel appears as a testimonial triptych with a christological purpose.

ANIMADVERSIONES

What Does It Mean to Say That There Are Additions in Luke 7,36-50?

Some scholars consider the small parable (Luke 7,41-43) to be an addition to an earlier story which is discernible now as Luke 7,36-47a; many scholars⁽¹⁾ consider vv. 47b-50 to be a further and final addition, to complete vv. 36-47a⁽²⁾. Certainly there are serious arguments in favour of these two positions, particularly the second. While one is willing to accept the hypotheses of these scholars, what seems to be lacking is a carry-through, an explanation of how much these additions come from outside the story. After all, 'addition', left to itself, can mean intrusion into what was a story already told with a theology and purpose. If one can hypothesize about additions to a text, one can also hypothesize as to the process involving these additions. It is this process that is discussed here.

1. *An Earlier Sitz-im-Leben*

When one reads 7,36-40.44-47a, it seems possible to identify both a meaning and a *Sitz-im-Leben* for the story. First, we are presented with the mysterious gestures of the woman, then we are presented with a judgment of Simon based on false knowledge, and finally an interpretation of the woman's actions which serves three purposes: 1) the woman's actions are to be understood as those of a forgiven person; 2) the erroneous judgment, more or less a straw man to lead into Jesus' words, is seen as that of one who truly does not know the woman or Jesus; 3) Jesus is truly a prophet, for Jesus does know the woman's state — Jesus is, in accord with Simon's criterion, a prophet. Given Luke's general interest in and emphasis on Christology, one leans very much to interpreting this story as an argument that, indeed, Jesus is a prophet. In this scenario, both the woman's actions and the monologue of Simon set up the revelation of Jesus' identity, which then is the culmination of the verses. This is especially true when the story shows no overt interest at all in the woman's moment of conversion and forgiveness, but only in their aftermath⁽³⁾.

(1) Cf. for example, J. FITZMYER, *The Gospel According To Luke* (AB 28; Garden City 1981) 684: "Verses 48-50 are an appendage ... (see V. TAYLOR, FGT, 153)".

(2) For a discussion of these 'additions', with limited bibliography, cf. J. NOLLAND, *Luke 1-9:20* (WBC 33a; Dallas 1989) 351.

(3) The more likely interpretation of the ὅτι clause (that the woman's love now indicates earlier forgiveness — cf. M. ZERWICK, *Graecitas Biblica* (Rome 1960) 136 — indicates that the forgiveness occurred before the story began. "The teaching of Christ had brought her to repentance and to assured forgiveness, and this assurance had inspired her love and gratitude", A. PLUMMER, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke* (ICC, Edinburgh 1922) 214. On the other hand, cf. A. STÖGER, *El*

The motive for making the event into a story about Jesus might be that the writer wanted to deepen his church's conviction that Jesus did have the knowledge traditionally associated with prophecy. Close to this motive is another: that the story offers a defence of Jesus against enemies of the Christians' claims about his knowledge. Too, one can understand the effect on the believer of the woman's actions as acts of 'love' of Jesus; the suggestion of encouraging piety is always a possible motive for telling a Gospel story. Close to this perspective is the possibility that the writer means to underline, at least in a secondary way, the ironic contrast between ungenerous (because unbelieving) host and the 'sinner'.

2. A later Sitz-im-Leben

It is this last possibility that might move a later writer to add to the existing story a comparison such as we have in vv. 41-43. The manner of writing the earliest story is geared to showing a Jesus who, like a prophet, has penetrating knowledge of the state of the woman's soul. A later writer, taking advantage of the direction of certain details of the story, draws from the story a further explicit meaning. That is, in his words to Simon, Jesus has contrasted strongly the kindnesses shown him by the woman and the lack of kindness shown him by the Pharisee. Thinking of these details makes one realize that imbedded in the story is a teaching about the state of Simon's soul. Thus, one deserves to make clear that the woman has been forgiven her many sins, and that Simon has not, on the basis of his lack of respect for Jesus, been forgiven his few⁽⁴⁾ sins⁽⁵⁾. A second writer would bring out a contrast that was already implicit in the story; he could do this in more than one way, but, granting the hypothesis of an addition, he does it by a parable⁽⁶⁾. The parable

Evangelio según San Lucas (Barcelona 1979) 3/1, 218: "El amor de la pecadora es al mismo tiempo, motivo y consecuencia del perdón"; also, L. GARCÍA-VIANA, *Evangelio según San Lucas* (MNT 3; Salamanca n.d.) 84-85. PLUMMER, *Luke*, 209, had earlier noted that "The connexion apparently is that she is an illustration of ver. 35". Probably this earlier forgiveness, then later gratitude means to see v. 35 as a kind of introduction of the woman's story: she "justifies God who is Wisdom" — cf. C. TALBERT, *Reading Luke* (SPCK; London 1982) 85, "...for God to be justified means for him to be acknowledged as right in the positions taken in the ministries of John and Jesus"; "Tambien ella va a ser así 'hija de la Sabiduría', M. TUYA, *Evangelios (Biblia Comentada)* 11; Madrid 1964) 815. FITZMYER, *Luke*, 684 suggests: "Better perhaps is the connection [v. 34] with [Jesus'] consorting with 'sinners'"; also, GARCÍA-VIANA, *Evangelio*, 74, and D. BOCK, *Luke 1:1-9:50* (Grand Rapids 1994) 689. Cf. R. MEYNET, *Vedi Questa Donna?* (Milano 2000) 149, where he uses the descriptive term "Una Parabola in Atto"; indeed, the main thesis of his book is to note a quality of parable about vv. 36-50 in regard to the previous verses.

(⁴) Some authors would prefer to translate ὀλίγων...ὀλίγων (47b) as "nothing": he is forgiven nothing who shows no love. Cf. G. ROSSÉ, *Vangelo secondo Luca* (Roma 2003) 83.

(⁵) Jesus does not put into question the good deeds Simon can claim to have done; thus, he is a man of few sins. Cf. PLUMMER, *Luke*, 214: As regards v. 47b, "...i.e. who thinks he has committed little which could need forgiveness; it is said with evident reference to Simon". R. FABRIS, *Luca* (Assisi 2003) 163 speaks of Simon in terms of "un'esperienza limitata di perdono".

(⁶) That an early church writer would be so creative and free-spirited to make up a parable for this occasion seems unlikely; the best one can say is that someone inserted into this story a parable of Jesus that originally was said in different circumstances.

succeeds admirably to express this contrast; without this parable (or its like), the contrast remains only implicit in the story.

Should we assume that the earliest writer could not see this second truth, about Simon, in his story? Are we to assume that only a later theology, developed elsewhere, has been imposed on this story, a theology which the original writer did not know? If so, we must assume that the earlier writer did not deduce that one who loves much reveals that he has been forgiven much, that one who is little forgiven shows this by loving little. Unlikely.

3. *The Lucan Sitz-im-Leben*

There are two considerations offered here. First, the 'problem' of the holder of the debts. Second, the woman's understanding of Jesus. It is a discussion of these two points that will yield a further meaning to the earlier renditions of this event.

1. The parable does its work and accomplishes its goal, but its very formation suggests a further knowledge on the part of the earlier authors. If the two figures of the three-figure parable can be identified as the woman and Simon, what denies to the reader a claim to know who the third figure is? The parable itself could have been constructed solely as a two person parable⁽⁷⁾. "As a great sinner reveals her forgiveness by effusive acts of love, so a lesser sinner reveals how little he has been forgiven by his lack of acts of love". There is no need to add a third figure to express the truth taught by contrast. So is one not correct in looking closely at the formulation of the parable, to ask oneself why is a third person mentioned (and prominently), and in consequence, to whom might the third person refer, now that we know that two of the figures refer to real people⁽⁸⁾?

2. We have conjectured that the earliest rendition of the story began with a woman already forgiven: there is no attempt in this story to describe that moment of forgiveness. Presumably, the woman had thought that God had forgiven her, that Jesus, like John, was the instrument of God to bring her to God's forgiveness⁽⁹⁾. We pick up this attitude in the story itself, as the woman comes to Jesus out of gratitude for his preaching to her⁽¹⁰⁾. What is missing is

⁽⁷⁾ Cf. H. MARSHALL, *The Gospel of Luke* (NIGTC 3; Grand Rapids 1978) 311: "The parable passes over the unusual nature of this act [forgiveness of debt] on the part of the creditor, and concentrates instead on the response of the forgiven debtors". Yet, in the explanation of the parable, the term *αὐτόν* is placed in a position of emphasis; note the attempt by many manuscripts to place other words in this emphatic position.

⁽⁸⁾ The inclusion of a third person in the parable does not mean that the person reading the parable could not concentrate solely on the gratitude of the one forgiven, as shown in vv. 42-43, with no allegorization made at this stage about the third person. This redactor has no reason to allegorize at this stage the forgiver of the debts; but it cannot be said that he is not aware that the parable implicitly contains a reference to the forgiver of sins. However, the third person is present and thus capable of being explicitly identified at a later stage with the forgiver of sins.

⁽⁹⁾ Cf. FITZMYER, *Luke*, 692: "...have been forgiven. I.e. by God.... [Jesus is] God's agent". The woman thought of God and Jesus in these terms, and so needed correction.

⁽¹⁰⁾ It seems more reasonable to affirm that the woman knew Jesus as preacher of forgiveness than to affirm that she knew him as the one who forgave her. If she knew him as forgiver of sins, she is the only one who has such knowledge; to be unique in this way does not do justice to the realities presented to us, above all because Luke offers no clarity

the correction of this attitude. It was Jesus who had forgiven her sins⁽¹¹⁾. This explains in part the significance of the parable. Not only did the parable establish the grounds for contrasting the reactions of the woman and Simon to Jesus, but it also establishes the fact that the forgiven is sure to thank the one who 'forgave the debt'.

The mention of these two problems and their solutions brings us to ask again: are we to assume that the writers before Luke did not understand in what they wrote, who was the forgiver of sins? Or is it not just as reasonable as not to think that Luke, inheriting vv. 36-47, drew out of this story what was implicitly already there⁽¹²⁾? From the composition of the parable and its inner dynamics, it seems that he who added the parable knew the deeper meaning of Jesus, while at the same time not explicitly stating it. We recall that his apparent practical reason for adding the parable was to emphasize, not Christology, but the bitter contrast between the action/inaction of the debtors forgiven⁽¹³⁾. It needed only a later writer to draw out from the story and its parable the deeper Christology therein. Luke does this by explicitly bringing to the attention of Theophilus the meaning he sees embedded in the story: Jesus is the one who forgives sins.

But, while doing this, Luke (albeit in a literary fashion) also makes clearer the inadequacy of the woman's estimate of Jesus and corrects it. For the one and only time in the story Jesus speaks directly to the woman⁽¹⁴⁾. Here he tells her that her sins have been forgiven. That this is said to her presumes that she is learning something she did not know before. It cannot be that she did not know her sins were forgiven. Rather, with the clarity brought by the question⁽¹⁵⁾ of the other dinner guests, we know that she learns who her forgiver is⁽¹⁶⁾. Again, is this clarity an imposition on a story which did not implicitly already contain it? It seems not. Rather, it is a clarification demanded by Luke's own *Sitz-im-Leben*, which is not that of those from whom he inherited this story. Luke wants to use this story to help Theophilus understand how reliable are the things he had been taught (Luke 1,4).

at all that the woman has this profound understanding of Jesus. Who in the Gospel ever did know this quality of Jesus? On the other hand, the influence of the previous verses (29-35) create the 'right place' for the woman's story and suggest strongly that Jesus is known to sinners under the rubric of "preacher of repentance and forgiveness".

⁽¹¹⁾ This is the judgment to be drawn from v. 49, and buttressed with the story of Luke 5,17-26.

⁽¹²⁾ Cf. FITZMYER, *Luke*, 684: "As pronouncement story and a parable they [36-47] should be regarded as having come to him so in the tradition".

⁽¹³⁾ In this scenario, it is the one who inserted the parable who added v. 47b; FITZMYER, *Luke*, 684 argues: "Verse 47c [our v. 47b] is an editorial addition, which relates the parable to the pronouncement story".

⁽¹⁴⁾ Cf. NOLLAND, *Luke*, 352, "But to deny to Jesus any direct address to the woman is to cause the pericope to fail as a literary unit". From a different perspective MARSHALL, *Luke*, 314 notes: "It comes as something of a surprise that Jesus now turns to the woman".

⁽¹⁵⁾ The question is so written that one knows it to be a characteristic clause; that is, what is at stake here is not just that Jesus has forgiven the woman, but that forgiveness of sins is a characteristic of Jesus' person. In this, the question is akin to what is given in Luke 5,24, which affirms Jesus' enduring power to forgive.

⁽¹⁶⁾ If the dinner guests heard Jesus' words to the woman (and they did), it can be presumed that the woman heard the dinner guests asking their question among themselves (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς).

Certainly, one of the major teachings offered to Theophilus had to do with the meaning of Jesus, now seated at the right hand of his Father. Indeed, most all of the Galilee phase of the Gospel (of which this story is a part) concentrates heavily on the meaning of Jesus. Thus, it is worth Luke's effort to bring out of this story the fullest Christology possible, in this case that Jesus has, on earth⁽¹⁷⁾, the power to forgive sins⁽¹⁸⁾.

4. *Final Aspects Which Respond to the Lucan Sitz-im-Leben*

Finally, we look to v. 50. The affirmation of verse can be found elsewhere⁽¹⁹⁾ in the Gospel; hence, it seems to be a free-floating saying of the Lord which is attached by Luke to conclude a story he inherited. This may be the case here, but is there a reason for this addition? Does the story contain within itself a situation which calls for a resolution, a resolution presumed by earlier writers, but now made explicit by Luke? There is a social situation established by this story⁽²⁰⁾. On the one hand, we have the woman who has been forgiven her sins (and now shows gratitude for that) and Jesus who knows her to be forgiven. On the other hand, we have the city, Simon and (most likely) the dinner guests — all of whom insist that she is a sinner⁽²¹⁾.

The social tension that exists here calls for some kind of resolution. The story itself points the way to this resolution. First, Jesus' statement, that the woman's sins have been forgiven (v. 48), is not only informative, it is also comforting and encouraging⁽²²⁾. Second, reference to faith and salvation alerts us to the woman's faith in Jesus, which leads to forgiveness⁽²³⁾. With faith, we are at a deeper level than the original plane of gratitude for forgiveness or forgiveness itself⁽²⁴⁾. Faith that saves is the enduring quality of the woman that will bring her to peace⁽²⁵⁾; forgiveness is just a moment on

⁽¹⁷⁾ Jesus has this power 'on earth' (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) (Luke 5,24).

⁽¹⁸⁾ Cf. TALBERT, *Luke*, 87-89: "The question of those at table with Jesus shapes the next phase of the discussion, 'Who is this, who even forgives sins'? How is it that Jesus can pronounce confirmation of the woman's forgiveness?" But the question of the table guests is not 'how can he confirm forgiveness', but who is this who even forgives'. Cf. F. BOVON, *L'Évangile selon Saint Luc*, 1-9,50 (Genève 1991) 386.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Luke 8,48; 17,19; 18,42. "This is a common dismissal formula", FITZMYER, *Luke*, 692.

⁽²⁰⁾ In regard to v. 50, PLUMMER, *Luke*, 214 notes: "He thus lends his authority to restore her to society".

⁽²¹⁾ It is a peculiarity of this story that there is no 'objective proof' (as in the case of Luke 5,17-26) that the woman has been forgiven. It falls to the believing reader to accept the claim that the woman has been forgiven.

⁽²²⁾ Cf. BOVON, *L'Évangile*, 386, "On ne nous dit pas si la femme s'en est réjouie; sans doute parce que cela va de soi".

⁽²³⁾ FITZMYER, *Luke*, 692 notes: "Her faith is to be considered as a confidence in God". Does she not have confidence in Jesus as well, since Luke does not allow it to be said that Jesus does not forgive sins.

⁽²⁴⁾ FABRIS, *Luca*, 163 speaks of faith: "[La parola di Gesù]...mostra la radice profonda del perdono".

⁽²⁵⁾ PLUMMER, *Luke*, 214 describes the woman's journey: "...into a lasting condition of peace". Forgiveness of sins is already enjoying a part of that final peace. Probably, Plummer refers to "peace with God" as "the lasting condition of peace", but it is hoped that there would come about a "lasting condition of peace with the city, the Pharisee and the dinner guests".

that journey. Third, there is need for at least internal peace and confidence in a world of criticism and ostracism. Jesus may not have convinced Simon, the dinner guests and the city that the woman should be known no longer as a sinner. But he at least has bolstered the woman's courage and conviction with his words of comfort. In offering some kind of calm within the storm of criticism she feels on every side, Jesus has put in its proper place the imposing triad "city-Pharisee-dinner guests". As noted, the story's very structure calls for these words of Jesus. It is most unlikely that the creator of the earliest story did understand the comfort the woman could draw from her response to Jesus. It needs only a word to make explicit what is already implicit in the inherited story.

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There is no historical doubt that the woman of vv. 36-50 came to Jesus with a sense of forgiveness and a desire to thank him; efforts to show the relationship of other "women" stories in Luke and John, so as to suggest that vv. 36-50 are unhistorical, stir interest but, ultimately, fail⁽²⁶⁾. In addition, the story was composed originally by believers in Jesus at the right hand of God: this suggests that, though their formulas were not the most expressive of their beliefs, they knew that Jesus enjoyed the powers of God, one of which is forgiveness⁽²⁷⁾. The earliest form of this event-turned-into-story indicates that it was aimed at an audience who, for various reasons, would profit from a contrast of two persons which would highlight the prophetic quality of Jesus⁽²⁸⁾. It cannot be shown that he who formulated this story was ignorant of the belief that Jesus forgives sins. It is better to assume that this Christian, because the *Sitz-im-Leben* he confronted called for another value, did not develop this aspect of Jesus. Then, once someone had introduced the small parable and the comment about it (vv. 41-43), the story, though directed again at a particular audience and teaching, lay open to the final form we have, that which shows Theophilus that what he had been taught, that Jesus can forgive sins, is reliable. That the one who inserted the parable was oblivious to the implications of his parable seems most unlikely. That Theophilus had not known (before he read Luke's Gospel) that Jesus was preached as having the power on earth to forgive sins — this is also less likely.

The main conclusion to all this lies in the area of source- and literary-criticism — specifically in the use of the term 'addition'. The impression is often given in commentaries that 'addition' means a piece of information or of faith that is foreign to the earlier story and/or to the tradition involved in the

⁽²⁶⁾ For a good discussion of the relationship among Luke, Matthew, Mark and John in this regard, cf. BOCK, *Luke*, 690-691.

⁽²⁷⁾ Very much allied with judgement (encapsulated in the Son of Man image) is mercy, the expression of which is forgiveness. Certainly there are somber statements made in the New Testament suggested by the strict impartiality of the Judge; yet, the Old Testament imagery can be called upon which says that ἐν τῷ ἀναστῆναι εἰς κρίσιν τὸν θεὸν τοῦ σώσαι πάντας τοὺς πρᾶεῖς τῆς γῆς διάψαλμα (Ps 75,10 [LXX]).

⁽²⁸⁾ J. KREMER, *Lucasevangelium* (NEB 3, Würzburg 1988) 86: "Durch sein Wissen um die Gedanken des Pharisäers zeigt Jesus, dass er 'ein Prophet' ist (vgl. 5,22)".

writing of the story. The effort in this brief essay has been to argue 1) that, based on what we know of the tradition before Luke, we cannot say that anything we find 'added' to the earliest story was foreign to it or to its author, 2) that care should be given in the use of the term 'addition' to make clear what precisely is meant in the concrete case when 'addition' is used in literary criticism.

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SUMMARY

Given the early development of the tradition about the divinity of Jesus and the Marcan, then Lucan conviction about his authority to forgive sins, it seems reasonable to see how Luke 7, 47-50 are not an addition from outside the story of the woman, Simon and Jesus. Rather, they can be seen as known by earliest editors of the story, with the story passed on and developed as circumstances required.

Der Antagonist Der Satan in der Hebräischen Bibel – eine bekannte Größe?

Die drei monotheistischen Weltreligionen Judentum, Christentum und Islam kennen alle die Figur des Satans. Den Namen entnahmen sie der Hebräischen Bibel. Dort begegnet השטן (masoretische Vokalisation: *haššātān*) nur in zwei kurzen Passagen (Sach 3,1-2; Ijob 1-2). Verschiedene Autoren versuchten, hieraus die Rolle der Figur im AT zu rekonstruieren⁽¹⁾. Es ist jedoch nicht notwendig, die Vorstellung eines bekannten Wesens hinter den beiden Texten zu vermuten. Eine sprachliche und textliche Analyse legt sogar nahe, dass die Hebräische Bibel השטן als unbekannte, nur literarische Figur einführt.

1. Drei Grundentscheidungen zur Etymologie von השטן

Zur etymologischen Einordnung von השטן sind drei grundsätzliche Alternativen denkbar: (1) Bei השטן handelt es sich um ein aus dem Umfeld Israels übernommenes Fremdwort. (2) Bei השטן handelt es sich um eine mit Hilfe des Suffix *-ān* nominalisierte und mit dem Artikel determinierte schwache Wurzel. (3) Bei השטן handelt es sich um das determinierte Nomen zur Wurzel שטן.

(1) Bei השטן könnte es sich um ein aus dem Umfeld Israels als Fremdwort entlehntes vierradikales undeterminiertes oder dreiradikales determiniertes Primärnomen handeln. Eine entsprechende Wurzel in anderen semitischen Sprachen ist jedoch nicht bekannt⁽²⁾, bzw. handelt es sich bei den Belegen von štn in den Targumim, im Mittelhebräischen, Syrischen, Mandäischen, Äthiopischen und Arabischen um Entlehnungen aus dem Hebräischen⁽³⁾.

(2) Gehörte das ש nicht zur Wurzel, wäre von einem schwachen Verb auszugehen. An in der Hebräischen Bibel belegten Wurzeln kämen שט (šwt – “abweichen” oder šwt⁽⁴⁾ – “umherstreifen” bzw. “verachten”) und שטח (šth – “abweichen”) in Frage. An eine solche Wurzel wäre das Suffix *-ān* getreten⁽⁵⁾. Im Hebräischen ist *-ān* jedoch als *-ōn* realisiert. Die wenigen (!)

⁽¹⁾ Vgl. P.L. DAY, *An Adversary in Heaven. šātān in the Hebrew Bible* (HSM 43; Atlanta 1988) 3-14 und K. NIELSEN, *Satan – the Prodigal Son? A Family Problem in the Bible* (Sheffield 1998) 52-56.

⁽²⁾ Vgl. P.L. DAY – C. BREYTENBACH, “Satan”, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Hrsg. K. v. D. TOORN – B. BECKING – P.W. v. D. HORST) (Leiden – Boston – Köln 1999) 726.

⁽³⁾ Vgl. K. NIELSEN, “שטן”, *TWAT* VII, 746. Auf eine phonetische Anbindung zu ägyptisch *šdnj* verweist M. GÖRG, *Der “Satan” – der “Vollstrecker” Gottes?*, *BN* 82 (1996) 9-12. Es wird jedoch nicht gezeigt, inwieweit die daraus gewonnene Interpretation von השטן als Vollstrecker des Willens Gottes den Schilderungen in Sach und Ijob entspricht.

⁽⁴⁾ שטח in Jes 28,15 wäre – auch wenn kein Schreibfehler vorliegt (שטח שטח in Jes 28,18 macht dies wahrscheinlich) – ebenso wie שטח (Jos 23,13) zu einer Wurzel שט zu stellen.

⁽⁵⁾ Vgl. H. BAUER – P. LEANDER, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments* (Halle 1922 = Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 1991) I, 500 (§ 61 tθ).

Ausnahmen von dieser Regel⁽⁶⁾ vermögen für שָׁטָן nicht zu überzeugen⁽⁷⁾, die Verbindung mit der Wurzel שָׁט in Ijob 1,7 und 2,2 ist als Volksetymologie zu bewerten⁽⁸⁾. Dennoch bleibt die Aussage über das Umherschweifen auf der Erde und das Wandeln auf ihr als Aussage über die Figur הַשָּׂטָן bestehen und könnte als "Spionagetätigkeit" im göttlichen Auftrag gewertet werden. Bereits 1968 wies Adolf Leo Oppenheim auf Informanten an altorientalischen Herrscherhäusern hin, die als "eyes of the king" in einer Art geheimdienstlicher Tätigkeit dem Herrscher über Fehlverhalten der Untertanen berichteten⁽⁹⁾. Die darauf bezugnehmende Interpretation von הַשָּׂטָן als "Eyes of the Lord" trifft sich inhaltlich mit der These Albert Brock-Utne von הַשָּׂטָן als "Verleumder"⁽¹⁰⁾: Menschen werden durch הַשָּׂטָן vor JHWH diffamiert.

Tatsächlich kommen in der Hebräischen Bibel "Augen JHWHs" vor, die auf der Erde umherstreifen (Sach 4,10; 2 Chr 16,9), wie es auch הַשָּׂטָן im Buch Ijob tut (vgl. Ijob 1,7;2,2), die Beschreibung der "Augen JHWHs" in Sacharja jedoch scheinen sich nicht auf הַשָּׂטָן zu beziehen. Auch könnten die Dialoge Ijob 1,7-12 und 2,2-7 als eine Art Diffamierung des Untertanen Ijob aufgefasst werden. Ob das Auftreten von הַשָּׂטָן in Sach 3,1 in einer Diffamierung bestanden hätte, ist nicht festzustellen, da es nicht zur Ausführung seiner Tätigkeit kommt.

(3) Die Wurzel שָׁטָן und ihre Nebenform שָׁטַם findet sich 43 mal in 38 Versen der Hebräischen Bibel:

שָׁטָן (35)	Nomen	mit Artikel (17)	Sach 3,1-2; Ijob 1,6-9.12; 2,1-4.6-7
	שָׁטָן (27)	ohne Artikel (10)	Num 22,22.32; 1 Sam 29,4; 2 Sam 19,23; 1 Kön 5,18; 11,14.23.25; Ps 109,6; 1 Chr 21,1
	Nomen שָׁטָם (2)		Gen 26,21; Esra 4,6
	Partizip (3)		Ps 71,13; 109,20.29
	Infinitiv (1)		Sach 3,1
	sonstige Verbalformen (2)		Ps 38,21; 109,4
שָׁטַם (8)	Nomen שָׁטָם (2)		Hos 9,7-8
	Verbalformen (6)		Gen 27,41; 49,23; 50,15; Ps 55,4; Ijob 16,9; 30,21

Setzte man die Bedeutung der Wurzel als unbekannt voraus, könnte man aus dem Kontext eine Grundbedeutung erschließen, die sich im Wortfeld von "in Opposition stehen" bzw. "sich in Opposition stellen" finden ließe⁽¹¹⁾. Eine

⁽⁶⁾ Vgl. C. BROCKELMANN, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen* (Berlin 1908 = Hildesheim 1961) II, 388 (§ 210c); J. BARTH, *Die Nominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen* (Leipzig 1894 = Hildesheim 1967) 318 (§194b).

⁽⁷⁾ Vgl. DAY, *An Adversary*, 18-19.

⁽⁸⁾ Vgl. NIELSEN, "שָׁטָן", 746.

⁽⁹⁾ Vgl. A.L. OPPENHEIM, "The Eyes of the Lord", *JAOS* 88 (1968) 173-180.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Vgl. A. BROCK-UTNE, "«Der Feind». Die alttestamentliche Satansgestalt im Lichte der sozialen Verhältnisse des nahen Orients", *Klio* 28 (1935) 219-227.

⁽¹¹⁾ Aus einer bedeutungseinschränkenden Übersetzung mit "anklagen" folgt eine forensische Interpretation der Rolle von הַשָּׂטָן als "himmlischer Staatsanwalt". Vgl. G. v. RAD, "διαβάλλω, διάβολος", *TWNT* II, 71-74. Ein Amt öffentlicher Strafverfolgung ist im Alten Orient aber nicht bekannt. Vgl. A. LODS, "Les origines de la figure Satan. Ses fonctions à la cour céleste", *Mélanges Syriens offerts à Monsieur René Dussaud par ses amis et ses élèves* (Hrsg. F. CUMONT ET AL.) (Paris 1939) II, 649-660; H.J. BOECKER, *Recht und Gesetz im Alten Testament und im Alten Orient* (Neukirchener Studienbücher 10; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1970) 16.

philologisch verantwortete Interpretation von *השטן* ist aus dieser Wurzel zu erheben. Für die Übernahme als Fremdwort fehlt bislang eine plausible Vorlage. Die Verwendung von *שטן* in Ijob 1,7 und 2,2 erklärt den Namen ebenfalls nicht. Hingegen stellt *השטן* die korrekte determinierte Nominalbildung der gut bezeugten Wurzel *שטן* dar. Synchron ist diese Etymologie in jedem Fall gültig, selbst wenn sich durch zukünftige Funde diachron eine andere ergeben sollte. In der sprachlichen Annäherung an die Texte ist also zunächst von einer allgemeinen Bedeutung von *השטן* als „der Opponent“ auszugehen.

2. Analyse der *השטן* erwähnenden Texte

Da *השטן* in der Hebräischen Bibel zwar 17-mal genannt wird⁽¹²⁾, dies aber im Bereich nur weniger Verse der Bücher Sacharja und Ijob geschieht, bedürfen die Passagen genauerer Betrachtung ihre Aussagen über *השטן* betreffend.

a) *השטן* im Buch Sacharja

Zunächst begegnet *השטן* in der vierten Vision des Sacharja:

Und er ließ mich Jeschua⁽¹³⁾ den Hohenpriester sehen stehend vor dem Engel des Herrn und *השטן* stehend zu seiner Rechten, um sich ihm in Opposition zu stellen (Sach 3,1).

Bereits in Sach 3,1 stellen sich zwei Fragen die Handlungen von *השטן* betreffend. Sowohl bei *עמד על-ימינו* als auch bei *לשטן* ist unklar, auf wen sich jeweils das Personalsuffix bezieht. Beide könnten auf den Hohenpriester Jeschua ebenso wie auf den Engel JHWHs verweisen. Damit sind vier Konstellationen möglich:

(1) *השטן* steht zur Rechten des Hohenpriesters Jeschua, um sich zu diesem in Opposition zu stellen.

(2) *השטן* steht zur Rechten des Hohenpriesters Jeschua, um sich zum Engel JHWHs in Opposition zu stellen.

(3) *השטן* steht zur Rechten des Engels JHWHs, um sich zu diesem in Opposition zu stellen.

(4) *השטן* steht zur Rechten des Engels JHWHs, um sich zum Hohenpriester Jeschua in Opposition zu stellen.

Weitere Zuordnungsschwierigkeiten ergeben sich für *ויען* in Vers 4. Wird mit *ויען* eine direkte Rede angekündigt, so geschieht dies meist in folgender Form⁽¹⁴⁾:

4.	3.	2.	1.
direkte Rede	<i>ויאמר</i>	Subjekt	<i>ויען</i>

⁽¹²⁾ *השטן* in 1 Chr 21,1 entspricht den übrigen Belegen des undeterminierten Nomens und ist in eine spezielle Interpretation von *השטן* nicht mit einzubeziehen.

⁽¹³⁾ Die deutsche Schreibung für *יהושע* folgt der Ausnahmeregelung der Loccumer Richtlinien.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Vgl. z.B. die Einleitungen der Reden des Buches Ijob: Ijob 3,2; 4,1; 6,1; 8,1; 9,1; 11,1; 12,1; 15,1; 16,1; 18,1; 19,1; 20,1; 21,1; 22,1; 23,1; 25,1; 26,1; 32,6; 34,1; 35,1; 38,1; 40,1; 40,3; 40,6; 42,1.

Zum Teil wird auch der Adressat vor oder nach וַיֹּאמֶר eingeschoben (vgl. z.B. Ijob 1,9). Außer in Sach 3,4 findet sich וַיֹּאמֶר ohne zwischengestelltes Subjekt nur an vier Stellen: Num 23,12; 1 Chr 12,18; Jes 21,9; Sach 4,6. In diesen Fällen lässt sich die Frage nach dem Sprecher nur aus dem Kontext erschließen. Zum Teil wird dabei die vorhergehende Sprechsituation umgedreht, da es sich um eine Erwiderung oder Antwort handelt (Num 23,12; Sach 4,6), zum Teil spricht das letztgenannte Subjekt (David in 1 Chr 12,18). In Sach 3,4 nun ergibt sich das Problem, ob nun der im Satz zuvor genannte מִלֵּאךְ Sprecher ist⁽¹⁵⁾, oder ob mit der Einleitung וַיֹּאמֶר die Sprechsituation von Sach 3,2 aufgegriffen wird, wo JHWH zu הַשֹּׁשֶׁן spricht. In diesem Fall wäre der dort Angesprochene — also הַשֹּׁשֶׁן — Subjekt zu וַיֹּאמֶר in Sach 3,4. Auch JHWH wird als Subjekt vorgeschlagen⁽¹⁶⁾.

Wer der Sprecher auch sei, vor ihm stehen weitere Wesen (vgl. Sach 3,4), die zuvor nicht erwähnt wurden. Aus dem weiteren Kontext ergibt sich, dass es sich dabei nicht um die drei zuvor genannten (Hohepriester Jeschua, Engel JHWHs, הַשֹּׁשֶׁן) handeln kann. Vor Jeschua sitzen ebenfalls weitere, nicht näher beschriebene Personen (vgl. Sach 3,8).

Erwartet man von Kapitel 3 des Buches Sacharja eine Beschreibung, nach der sich die Vision exakt rekonstruieren ließe, so sieht man sich enttäuscht. Es ist nicht klar, wo die Szene stattfindet, welchen Charakters die erzählten Ereignisse sind und welche Personen oder Figuren genau anwesend sind. Entgegen dem ersten Eindruck, wie er durch die scheinbar erhellenden Präpositionen עַל-יְמִינוֹ (Sach 3,1) und לְפָנָיו (Sach 3,1.3.4.9) suggeriert wird, ist nicht mit Sicherheit festzustellen, wo sich die Beteiligten in Relation zueinander befinden. Bei einem Teil der Handlungen schließlich ist nicht sicher, wer in Aktion tritt. Eine genaue Rekonstruktionsbeschreibung kann also nicht Sinn des Kapitels sein. Stattdessen müssen die beschriebenen Vorgänge auf ihren funktionalen Wesensgehalt hin überprüft werden. Bei לְפָנָיו etwa kann der räumliche Aspekt völlig in den Hintergrund treten, die Präposition nimmt dann einen funktionalen Sinn an, z.B. Verdeutlichung von Würde und Bedeutung dessen, vor dem gestanden wird⁽¹⁷⁾.

Betrachtet man Sach 3 funktional, stellt sich die Frage, welche Aussagen über הַשֹּׁשֶׁן noch getroffen werden können. Das Stehen zur Rechten Jeschuas bzw. des Engels JHWHs sollte dabei nicht überinterpretiert werden, zumal noch nicht einmal klar gesagt werden kann, an wessen Seite (Jeschuas oder des Engels JHWHs) er sich befindet. In Sach 3,1 tritt "der Opponent" auf, "um in Opposition zu treten"; diese zweifache Verwendung der selben Wurzel betont im Sinne einer Figura Etymologica die geplante Gegnerschaft. Ebenso intensiv wird הַשֹּׁשֶׁן aber auch zurückgewiesen. Die durch Doppelung von שָׁטָן ausgedrückte Gegnerschaft wird durch die Doppelung von עָרָה entkräftet:

⁽¹⁵⁾ Auch Jeschua käme theoretisch als Subjekt von Sach 3,3 in Frage, allerdings kann dies aufgrund des Imperativs in Vers 4 (הִסִּיר הַבְּנוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּים מֵעַלָּיו) logisch ausgeschlossen werden.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Vgl. H.G. REVENTLOW, *Die Propheten Haggai, Sacharja und Maleachi* (ATD 25,2; Göttingen 1993) 53.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Vgl. H. SIMIAN-YOFRE, "פָּנָיו", *TWAT* VI, 651-652.

Sach 3,1	Sach 3,2
... והשמן יגער יהוה בך השמן
... לשמן יגער יהוה בך ...

Entscheidend ist also die Tatsache, dass השמן zur Szene hinzutritt, und nicht, wo er steht.

Nimmt man an, dass sich ויען in Sach 3,4 auf den Engel JHWHs als Subjekt bezieht, und somit השמן im Text nach Vers 2 nicht mehr vorkommt, ist das letzte, das über ihn ausgesagt wird, dass er durch JHWH gescholten (גער) werden soll (Sach 3,2), die Reaktion auf sein Auftreten, das erfolgt, "um sich ihm in Opposition zu stellen" (לשמן).

Somit bleibt als einzige Aussage des Textes: השמן tritt auf, um die in seinem Namen bereits ausgedrückte Aufgabe ("sich in Opposition stellen") zu erfüllen. Wie diese Tätigkeit erfolgt wäre, erfährt der Leser nicht, da השמן von JHWH an der Ausführung gehindert wird.

b) השמן im Buch Ijob

In Ijob 1,6 und 2,1 erscheint "auch השמן inmitten" der האלהים. Dabei lässt sich nicht entscheiden, ob er selbst ebenfalls zu ihnen zu zählen ist oder nicht. In letzterem Fall stellt sich die Frage, warum die האלהים überhaupt auftauchen, spielen sie doch im folgenden keinerlei Rolle mehr. Haben sie keine Funktion im Ablauf der Erzählung, müssen sie entweder genannt werden, um die Figur השמן selbst oder aber die Szene als Ganzes zu charakterisieren, eventuell auch beides. Gefragt werden muss im folgenden also nach der Aussage, die das Auftreten der האלהים impliziert.

Die האלהים werden außer im Ijob-Prolog (Ijob 1,6; 2,1) noch einmal in diesem Buch (Ijob 38,7) sowie zweimal im Buch Genesis (Gen 6,2,4) genannt. Die Bedeutung, die je nach Interpretation des Status Constructus von בניים zwischen "Söhne Gottes", "Kinder Gottes" und "die Göttlichen" liegt, ist allein noch nicht aussagekräftig. In Ijob 38,7 jubeln (רוע) die האלהים, wobei die Umstände – die machtvollen Schöpfungstaten – nur knapp angedeutet werden, der Vers bleibt mythisch-geheimnisvoll. Auch die Urgeschichte lässt die Identität der האלהים im Dunkeln⁽¹⁸⁾. Die einzige klare Aussage, das Zeugen von Nachkommenschaft auf der Erde, scheint keine Verbindung zu der in Ijob 1-2 angedeuteten Szene aufzuweisen. Binnenkanonisch ist über das Wesen der האלהים nicht viel mehr zu erfahren als das, was ihr Name bereits aussagt: Es handelt sich um in irgendeiner Art und Weise göttliche Wesenheiten im Umfeld JHWHs. Beide Elemente, Nähe zu JHWH und Gottähnlichkeit, zumindest im Sinne von Übermenschlichkeit, ergeben sich auch aus den nach Ijob 1,6 und 2,1 folgenden Gesprächen. Dazu ist das Auftreten der האלהים also nicht nötig, folglich soll es eher die ganze Szene als die Figur השמן charakterisieren.

Szenen der Hebräischen Bibel, die sich in göttlichem, "himmlischem" Umfeld abspielen, tragen den Charakter von Versammlungen; der eine Gott ist von anderen nichtmenschlichen Wesen umgeben. Gottesbezeichnung und Beschreibung der Gott umgebenden Wesen differieren dabei voneinander:

⁽¹⁸⁾ Eine Interpretation von Gen 6,1-4 wirft ohnehin mehr Fragen auf als sie beantworten kann. Vgl. N.M. SARNA, בראשית. Genesis. The Traditional Hebrew Text with new JPS Translation/Commentary (Philadelphia – New York – Jerusalem) 45.

1 Kön 22,19 / 2 Chr 18,18	יְדוּהָה	das ganze Heer der Himmel bei ihm stehend zu seiner Rechten und seiner Linken
Ps 82,1	אֱלֹהִים	in der Gottesversammlung inmitten der Götter
Jes 6,1-2	סְרָפִים	Serafim über ihm stehend
Ijob 1,6; 2,1	יְדוּהָה	Es kamen die בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, um JHWH ihre Aufwartung zu machen

Wie sind diese Versammlungen jeweils zu charakterisieren? Handelt es sich um Audienzen im Thronsaal Gottes, Gerichtsszenen, Schilderungen einer himmlischen Ratsversammlung, ungezwungene Treffen göttlicher Wesen? Die Antwort wird für die oben genannten Beispiele aus dem jeweiligen Kontext heraus je anders lauten. So scheint 1 Kön 22,19 bzw. 2 Chr 18,18 die Züge einer Ratsversammlung zu tragen, Psalm 82,6 spricht vom Richten (שפט) Gottes. Ein wiederkehrendes Element ist das des Thrones (כִּסֵּא, 1 Kön 22,19, 2 Chr 18,18, Jes 6,1), auf dem Gott sitzt. Der Thron aber kann wiederum auch Ort des Richtens sein (vgl. 1 Kön 7,7; Ps 9,5; Jes 16,5).

Wie nun lässt sich die "himmlische" Versammlung im Ijob-Prolog charakterisieren? In Ijob 1,6 erfährt man über die בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים, dass sie kommen, um sich vor JHWH hinzustellen (לְהִרְצֵב עַל-יְדוּהָה). Diese Aussage bedarf genauerer Betrachtung.

Die Formulierung יָצַב על tritt in Verbindung mit einer Person (bzw. JHWH) nur noch an zwei weiteren Stellen auf, wo sie sich auf Gott (Sach 6,5) und König Rehabeam (2 Chr 11,13) bezieht. Es erscheint also wahrscheinlich, dass diese Formulierung verwendet wird, wenn ein Geringerer sich vor einem Höhergestellten "aufstellt" im Sinne von "seine Aufwartung machen". Erhärtet wird diese Vermutung durch die Verwendung der Wurzel יָצַב innerhalb der Konstruktion יָצַב לְפָנַי, die ebenfalls in Situationen der Begegnung mit jemand Hochgestelltem verwendet wird: Ex 8,16; 9,13; Jos 24,1; 1 Sam 10,19; Spr 22,29. Von einem "ungezwungenen Treffen göttlicher Wesen" ist also nicht auszugehen. Von den drei übrigen der oben genannten Möglichkeiten trifft der Begriff der "Audienz" am ehesten das nun folgende Geschehen des Gesprächs zwischen JHWH und הַשָּׂטָן. Weder steht Ijob wie bei einem Gerichtsverfahren unter Anklage — ihm wird ja kein begangenes Verbrechen vorgeworfen — noch findet das Gespräch als "himmlische Ratsversammlung" — also unter Beteiligung der anderen בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים⁽¹⁹⁾ — statt.

Die Initiative zu den Gesprächen Ijob 1,7-12 und 2,2-7 ergreift jeweils JHWH, indem er הַשָּׂטָן fragt, woher er komme (Ijob 1,7a; 2,2a). Er habe sich auf der Erde aufgehalten (Ijob 1,7b; 2,2b). JHWH stellt eine zweite Frage: Ob er auf Ijob seinen Sinn gerichtet (שֵׁים לֵב) habe (Ijob 1,8a; 2,3aα). Eine Antwort wird aber nicht abgewartet, werden doch durch die folgenden Worte die vorherigen Fragen als rhetorische entlarvt: Ijob und seine Rechtschaffenheit sollen ins Gespräch gebracht werden (Ijob 1,8a; 2,3aβ-b). Seine Untadeligkeit wird von הַשָּׂטָן nicht bestritten, jedoch relativiert, indem er ihm eine Gesinnung des *do ut des* unterstellt: Die herausragende Frömmigkeit Ijobs stehe in direktem Zusammenhang mit der herausragenden Güte JHWHs

(¹⁹) In 1 Kön 22,20 bzw. 2 Chr 18,19 ist die Beteiligung aller Anwesenden der Fall.

ihm gegenüber (Ijob 1,9-11). JHWH lässt *השטן* den Beweis seiner These antreten, indem er ihm uneingeschränkte Gewalt über Ijobs Besitz — zunächst jedoch nicht über ihn selbst — zusagt (Ijob 1,12a). Davon macht *השטן* in den Schicksalsschlägen Ijob 1,13-19 Gebrauch. Obwohl der so Geschädigte immer noch in vorbildlicher Weise an seiner Frömmigkeit festhält, relativiert *השטן* dies wiederum im zweiten Gespräch (Ijob 2,4-5). In diesem Zusammenhang ist auffällig, dass JHWH selbst sich verantwortlich für das Leid Ijobs sieht: *השטן* hätte ihn gereizt (סוּר), Ijob auf die Probe zu stellen (Ijob 2,3). Dennoch darf *השטן* dem Leidenden mit Geschwüren am ganzen Körper versehen (Ijob 2,7). Danach ist von ihm keine Rede mehr.

Misst man der Bezeichnung *השטן* für das Wesen des Ijobprologs eine Bedeutung zu, so stellt sich die Frage, zu wem diese Figur in Opposition steht. Als Möglichkeiten ergeben sich entweder die Opposition zu JHWH oder die zu Ijob. Im letzten Fall könnten die Bezeichnungen *השטן* und *איוֹב* gemäß der semantischen Teilentsprechung zwischen *שטן* und *אִיב* antithetisch korrespondieren: Fasst man den Namen *אִיב* passivisch als „Angefeindeter“ (= „Person, zu der sich in Opposition gestellt wird“) auf⁽²⁰⁾, ergäbe dies eine mögliche Entsprechung zu „der Opponent“.

c) Zusammenfassung der Aussagen über *השטן*

Als eine gemeinsame Aussage der Bücher Sacharja und Ijob lässt sich festhalten, dass es sich bei *השטן* um ein supranaturales Wesen in göttlichem, „himmlischem“ Umfeld handelt. Im Ijobprolog entfaltet sich gar ein Dialog zwischen ihm und JHWH, während in der vierten Vision des Sacharja *השטן* an jedem Handeln gehindert wird. Aus den Texten geht nicht hervor, ob *השטן* in Sacharja und Ijob jeweils dasselbe Wesen bezeichnet, oder ob in beiden Passagen ein je anderes Wesen die Aufgabe des sich-in-Opposition-Stellens übernimmt, und aus diesem Grund mit der Kurzbeschreibung *השטן* versehen wird.

3. *השטן* als literarische Figur

Üblicherweise gehen Interpretationen von *השטן* in der Hebräischen Bibel davon aus, dass ein solches Wesen in der Vorstellungswelt Israels zur Zeit der Abfassung der alttestamentlichen Schriften existiert hätte. Die Bücher Sacharja und Ijob ließen somit einen bekannten Charakter auftreten⁽²¹⁾. Zuwenig wurde bisher bedacht, dass es sich bei *השטן* ebenso um eine literarische Figur handeln könnte, die erstmals in den alttestamentlichen Büchern auftaucht, zuvor aber unbekannt war⁽²²⁾. Im folgenden soll eine Hypothese erörtert werden, nach der *השטן* zunächst eine rein literarische Figur

⁽²⁰⁾ Freilich wäre dies eine Volksetymologie. Zum Namen *אִיב* vgl. F. HORST, *Hiob* (BKAT 16/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1968) 7-8. Vgl. auch F. GRADL, *Das Buch Ijob* (Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar zum Alten Testament 12; Stuttgart 2001) 33.

⁽²¹⁾ Der bestimmte Artikel und die knappen, zum Teil undurchsichtigen Belege von *השטן* in der Hebräischen Bibel könnten durchaus in diese Richtung weisen.

⁽²²⁾ Ebenfalls eine primär nur literarische Existenz bescheinigt der Figur H.-J. FABRY, „Satan“ – Begriff und Wirklichkeit. Untersuchungen zur Dämonologie der alttestamentlichen Weisheitsliteratur, *Die Dämonen*. Die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt (Hrsg. A. LANGE) (Tübingen 2003) 286.

ist, die zur Zeit ihrer ersten Erwähnung in den Büchern der Hebräischen Bibel keinen Platz in der religiösen Glaubenswelt des damaligen Judentums hatte.

Die Hauptfigur, der "Held" eines Werkes wird in der Literaturwissenschaft auch als "Protagonist" bezeichnet. Steht diesem ein Gegenspieler gegenüber, spricht man vom "Antagonisten". Schon der Titel des Buches Ijob weist diesen als dessen "Helden" aus. Nicht für das gesamte Buch Sacharja, jedoch für die Vision, wie sie in Kapitel drei geschildert wird, nimmt die Rolle des Protagonisten der Hohepriester Jeschua oder aber der Engel JHWHs ein. Diese beiden kommen auch in Frage, wenn man nach dem Objekt fragt, auf das sich das durch לשמו ausgedrückte Vorhaben von השם in Sach 3,1 bezieht. Zu Recht kann dieser als Antagonist in Sach 3 bezeichnet werden. Auch in Ijob 1-2 ist er derjenige, der sich gegen den Protagonisten Ijob stellt und damit den Antagonisten des Ijobprologs verkörpert. Sprachlich ist dabei auffällig, dass "Antagonist" eine adäquate Übersetzung von השם darstellt.

Beide Passagen, in denen השם eine Rolle spielt, bedürfen in ihrer Dramaturgie dieses Elements der Opposition, und beide spielen in einem überweltlichen, "himmlischen" Milieu. Die Schicksalsschläge gegen Ijob müssen einerseits von JHWH kommen, da er allmächtig ist, andererseits muss dann aber erklärt werden, warum der Gerechte leiden muss. Auch in der vierten Vision des Sacharja muss eine Opposition auftauchen, allerdings mit dem einzigen Zweck, diese sofort wieder abzuweisen. Tatsächlich wäre es an diesen Stellen möglich, eine Figur einzusetzen, die bekannt ist, und zu der solche "Rollen" passen. Geschickter wäre es aber, ein solches Wesen gerade nicht auftreten zu lassen, um sich "kein Bild zu machen" vom Umfeld JHWHs und dem Zustandekommen seiner Entscheide. Die zahlreichen Unklarheiten der beiden Texte wären auf diese Weise elegant erklärt: Eine konkrete Vorstellung soll gar nicht entstehen. Was in einer Interpretation solche Schwierigkeiten macht, die Unrekonstruierbarkeit der Szene Sach 3, die Form ihrer Mitteilung als Vision oder die Erwähnung der mythisch-rätselhaften בני האלהים, könnten geradezu als Signale an den Leser verstanden werden: "Versuche nicht, diese Passagen wörtlich zu nehmen!" Die Texte sollen in ihrer Aussage betrachtet werden, jede Konkretisierung in Form von auftretenden Personen dient lediglich der literarischen Vermittlung dieser Inhalte. Für die Betrachtung von השם hieße dies, dass dieser bewusst in einen Kontext gestellt wurde, der ihn als literarisches Wesen charakterisiert.

Somit ließe sich zum Auftreten von השם in Sach 3 und Ijob 1-2 sagen: Im Verlauf beider Erzählungen bedarf es des Moments der Opposition. Diese wird von einer Figur verkörpert, die von Anfang an so auftritt, dass sich Fragen über ihre Existenz gar nicht erst stellen sollen. Als Bezeichnung wird deshalb ein abstrakter Titel gewählt, der als eine Art "Platzhalter" lediglich die dramaturgische Rolle beschreibt: השם = "der Antagonist".

SUMMARY

Considering the figure of *השטן* in the Hebrew Bible, the attempt to reconstruct a figure which already existed in the imaginary world of Ancient Israel in biblical times must fail. Zech 3 and Job 1-2 obstruct the development of a precise image out of YHWH's environment. The texts achieve that by their inherent vagueness of description. For this reason the antagonistic element necessary for the dramatic plot of both texts does not consist in an already existing, known being. It is rather named by the abstract term 'the opponent', in Hebrew '*השטן*'.

The Fourth Deliverer A Josephite Messiah in 4QTestimonia

It is generally recognized that Messianic belief at Qumran was not rigid. Some texts witness to two deliverers. Others are thought to have three: priest messiah, king messiah, and prophet⁽¹⁾. I wish to suggest here that one text, so far understood as having three deliverers, has in fact four.

1. 4Q175

4Q175 (4QTestimonia) dates from the early first century BCE⁽²⁾. A well-preserved text, it comprises four separate sections, clearly demarcated by spaces and hook-shaped symbols, on a single page. The only damaged portion is the bottom right-hand corner, which leaves some gaps in the fourth testimony, but does not greatly hinder the understanding of the document as a whole. It is described as “a messianic anthology” and “a collection of fundamental biblical texts or ‘testimonies’, relating to messianic beliefs”⁽³⁾. Each of its four sections cites a Bible text ending with a curse, as follows: (1) Deut 18,18-19, the prophet like Moses; (2) Num 24,15-17, the star come out of Jacob; (3) Deut 33,8-11, the blessing of the Levites; (4) Josh 6,26, Joshua’s curse on Jericho, followed by a passage from the *Joshua Apocryphon* (4Q379) another document found at Qumran⁽⁴⁾. Here is the fourth passage.

At the moment when Joshua finished praising and giving thanks with his psalms, he said “Cursed be the man who rebuilds this city! Upon his first-born will he found it, and upon his benjamin will he erect its gates!” (Josh 6,26). And now an accursed man, one of Belial, has arisen to be a fowler’s trap for his people and ruin for all his neighbours. ...will arise, to be the two instruments of violence. And

⁽¹⁾ 4Q175; 1QS IX.10-11. They are by the same scribe.

⁽²⁾ For more on text and dating see F.M. CROSS, “Testimonia (4Q175=4QTestimonia= 4QTestim)”, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (Tübingen 2002) VI B, 308. The Western Semitic Research Project website has a photograph: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/wsrp/index.html>.

⁽³⁾ G. VERMES, *Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London 1962) 247; A. DUPONT-SOMMER, *The Essene Writings from Qumran* (Oxford 1961) 317.

⁽⁴⁾ The *Joshua Apocryphon*, or *Psalms of Joshua*, consists of 4Q378 and 379 (4QPsJoshua a & b). The 4Q175 citation is from 4Q379. As the *Joshua Apocryphon* includes Josh 6.26, the whole fourth testimony is taken from 4Q379. See C.A. NEWSOM, “The ‘Psalms of Joshua’ from Qumran Cave 4”, *JJS* 39 (1988) 56-73, who thinks it was not composed at Qumran (59); B.Z. WACHOLDER – M.G. ABEGG, *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls* (Washington 1991) III, 178-189; T.H. LIM, “The ‘Psalms of Joshua’ (4Q379 fr. 22 col. 2): A Reconsideration of its Text”, *JJS* 44 (1993) 309-312; C.A. NEWSOM, “4Q378 and 4Q379: An Apocryphon of Joshua”, *Qumranstudien* (ed. H.-J. FABRY – A. LANGE – H. LICHTENBERGER) (Göttingen 1996) 35-85; E. TOV, “The Rewritten Book of Joshua as Found at Qumran and Masada”, *Biblical Perspectives. Early Use and Interpretation of the Bible in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. M.E. STONE – E.G. CHAZON) (STDJ 28; Leiden 1998) 233-256.

they will rebuild [...er]ect for it a rampart and towers, to make it into a fortress of wickedness [...] in Israel, and a horror in Ephraim and Judah. [...] will commit a profanation in the land and a great blasphemy among the sons of [...]blo]od like water upon the ramparts of the daughter of Zion and in the precincts of Jerusalem⁽⁵⁾.

Let us identify the *dramatis personae*. First there is Joshua. Martial man of God, Moses' successor, king-killer, sun-stopper, razer of walls, he speaks his words at the conquest of Jericho and praises and thanks God. He is undoubtedly the hero of the fourth testimony, just as Moses, the Star from Jacob, and the Levitical Priest are the heroes of the first three. Juxtaposed to Joshua is the "accursed man" who is surely the villain of the piece. Then there are "the two instruments of violence" who may be either the "accursed man" plus an associate or — in line with Joshua's words — the accursed man's two sons. They are to rebuild a city, presumably the one Joshua destroyed. Clearly all these details were relevant within the historical settings of the writer of the *Joshua Apocryphon* and of the writer of 4Q175 who cited them later. However, as my concern is not history but messianic typology, I shall focus on the text's four heroes.

Commentators are virtually unanimous that the figures of the first three testimonies — Moses, the Star, and the Priest — represent eschatological prophet, king, and priest figures⁽⁶⁾. It is easy to see why. The same three latterday heroes appear in IQS IX.10-11 by the same Qumran scribe. But little has been said about the fourth testimony. Dupont-Sommer and Cross say the villains represent enemies of the Qumran sect — a likely explanation — but say nothing about the Joshua figure himself⁽⁷⁾. In fact, in the entire corpus of scholarship on this passage, I know of no comment at all upon who or what Joshua might represent. Most commentators simply ignore the figure. Some even dismiss it as irrelevant⁽⁸⁾.

It is unclear why the Joshua figure has been so overlooked. All four testimonies are identical in structure: hero figure, Bible verse and curse. If the first three represent eschatological deliverers, there would seem to be an *a priori* case for the fourth to be taken the same way. This would not only explain the Joshua figure itself, but would make sense of the entire document rather than

(⁵) The English is from F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*. The Qumran Texts in English (Leiden – New York – Cologne 1994) 137-138; some of the textual reconstructions are omitted.

(⁶) See e.g., D. FLUSSER, "Messiah: Second Temple Period", *EJ* XI, 1409; G. VERMES, *Jesus the Jew* (London 1973) 96; *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 248; G.J. BROOKE, *Exegesis at Qumran* (JSOTSS 29; Sheffield, 1985) 309-310; F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, *Qumran and Apocalyptic* (Leiden 1992) 174; "Messianische Erwartungen in den Qumranschriften", *JBTh* 8 (1993) 203-207; F. GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ – J. TREBOLLE BARRERA, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Leiden 1995) 186; J.J. COLLINS, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London 1997) 71, 79; G.G. XERAVITS, *King, Priest, Prophet* (STDJ 47; Leiden 2003) 57-59, 226-228. J. Lübke's view, that the text should be interpreted historically rather than eschatologically, has not commanded widespread consent ("A Reinterpretation of 4 Q Testimonia", *RevQ* 12 [1986] 177-186).

(⁷) DUPONT-SOMMER, *The Essene Writings*, 317; CROSS, "Testimonia", 309.

(⁸) COLLINS, *Apocalypticism*, 79.

just its first three-quarters. But for some reason this has not been suggested⁽⁹⁾. Nonetheless I propose that to interpret the fourth testimony in a manner consistent with the first three is eminently reasonable and produces a quite acceptable result, that is, an eschatological Joshua. This figure, like biblical Joshua, would be a warlike conqueror and trace his descent from Joseph and Ephraim. We might rightly call him War Messiah ben Ephraim ben Joseph.

Three further pieces of evidence may confirm this proposal: (i) the 'Four Craftsmen' *baraita* of rabbinic literature; (ii) the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Exod 40,9-11; and (iii) messianic Joshua traditions.

2. Four Craftsmen

The 'Four Craftsmen' tradition on Zech 2,3 appears in seven texts in two major variants. The earliest variant appears in *Pesiqta Rabbati* 15.14-15, *Pesiqta deRav Kahana* 5.9, and *Song Rabbah* 2.13.4, and is attributed to tannaitic period teachers⁽¹⁰⁾. Here is PesR 15.14-15.

The flowers appear on the earth (Song 2.12). R. Isaac said, "It is written: *And the Lord showed me four craftsmen* (Zech 2.3). These are they: Elijah, the King Messiah, Melchizedek and the War Messiah."

A second variant, attributed to later authorities, appears in *Suk* 52b, *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah* 96, and *Yalqut Shim'oni* on Zech 1,20 (568)⁽¹¹⁾. Here is the Bavli version.

And the Lord showed me four craftsmen (Zech 2.3). Who are these four craftsmen? Rav Hana bar Bizna said in the name of Rav Shimon Ḥasida: "Messiah ben David, Messiah ben Joseph, Elijah, and the Righteous Priest."

⁽⁹⁾ This may be due to the widespread view that Messiah ben Joseph is a late idea, developing out of Bar Kokhba's defeat in 135 CE. See e.g., J. HAMBURGER, *Realenzyklopädie des Judentums* (Strelitz i. M. 1874) II, 768; J. LEVY, "Mashiah", *Neuhebräisches und chaldäisches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig 1876/1889) III, 270-272; A. EDERSHEIM, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (s.l. 1883) 79, n.1, 434-435; J. KLAUSNER, *The Messianic Idea in Israel* (London 1956) 487-492; S. HURWITZ, *Die Gestalt des sterbenden Messias* (Zürich – Stuttgart 1958) 178-180; VERMES, *Jesus the Jew*, 139-140. In "Rabbi Dosa and the Rabbis Differ: Messiah ben Joseph in the Babylonian Talmud", *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 8 (2005) 77-90, I have tried to show that this idea is mistaken and present the case for ben Joseph being fully developed by the mid-first century CE. J. Heinemann has suggested that an existing militant Ephraim Messiah became a dying messiah by analogy with Bar Kokhba ("The Messiah of Ephraim and the Premature Exodus of the Tribe of Ephraim", *HTR* 68 [1975] 1-15). Although such a view is not at odds with my conclusion in this paper, I feel it is not supported by evidence elsewhere.

⁽¹⁰⁾ PesK also attributes it to the fourth generation *tanna* R. Isaac (fl. 140-165) in the editions of Buber (S. BUBER, *Pesiqta de-Rav Kahana* [Lyck 1868]) and Braude (*R. Kahana's Compilation of Discourses for Sabbaths and Festal Days* [ed. W.G. BRAUDE – I.J. KAPSTEIN] [Philadelphia 1975]), but A.K. Wünsche (*Bibliotheca Rabbinica* [Leipzig 1885] III, 61) gives the second generation *tanna* 'R. Eleazar' (fl. 80-120). I have been unable to verify his Hebrew original. CantR 2.13.4 attributes it to R. Berekiah in the name of R. Isaac.

⁽¹¹⁾ Suk 52b and the Yalq attribute it to R. Hana bar Bizna in the name of R. Shimon Ḥasida, a little-known figure, probably of the late tannaitic period (Hag 13b-14a; S. FRIEMAN, *Who's Who in the Talmud* [Northvale, NJ 1995] 291; Soncino Talmud, 722), whose teachings are known mainly through his third century disciple R. Hana (FRIEMAN, *Who's Who*, 84). SER gives no authority for the tradition.

Of course both variants show the same figures⁽¹²⁾. Elijah is the same in each case. Messiah ben David is the King Messiah. The Righteous Priest is Melchizedek — in the Bible Melchizedek is always a priest (Gen 14,18-20; Ps 110,4) and there is supporting MS evidence⁽¹³⁾. That leaves Messiah ben Joseph to be identified with the War Messiah, a widely-held conclusion⁽¹⁴⁾, supported by numerous texts⁽¹⁵⁾.

The ‘Four Craftsmen’ tradition therefore features the same figures as I identified in 4Q175. In fact the earliest version of the ‘Four Craftsmen’ even presents the figures in the same order: prophet, king, priest, and Josephite War Messiah⁽¹⁶⁾.

Diagram 1: The Four Craftsmen & 4Q175

	Redeemer Figures			
4Q175	Prophet	King Messiah	Priest	Joshua, War Messiah ben Joseph
Four Craftsmen. Variant A.	Prophet	King Messiah	Priest	War Messiah ben Joseph

Such a correspondence of figures, number and order is striking. The likelihood of its being accidental is small: 1 in 24, to be precise, the probability of four names arbitrarily falling in a given sequence. The introduction of other variables, such as number and identity of figures, would push the probability lower still⁽¹⁷⁾. This seems to corroborate our interpretation of 4Q175.

As for the relation between these texts, while direct dependence cannot

(12) A third variant of the ‘Four Craftsmen’ is found in the medieval compilation NumR 14.1, where the priest is replaced by a Manasseh Messiah.

(13) The Munich manuscript has “and Melchizedek” instead of “and the Righteous Priest” (R. RABBINOVICZ, *Variae Lectiones* [Munich 1870] III, 170).

(14) G.H. DALMAN, *Der leidende und der sterbende Messias der synagoge* (Berlin 1888) 6; L. GINZBERG, “Eine unbekannte jüdische Sekte”, *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 58 [1914] 421; HEINEMANN, “The Messiah of Ephraim”, 7; H. FREEDMAN – M. SIMON, *The Midrash* (London 1939) I, 698, n. 2; IX, 125, n. 3; M. JASTROW, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York 1950) 852 (“Mashiah”).

(15) GenR 99.2; Tan I.103a (§11.3); NumR 14.1; AgBer §63 (*Bet ha-Midrash* [= *BHM*] [ed. A. JELLINEK] [Leipzig 1853-1877] IV, 87); “Jelamdenu-Fragmente” §20 from *Kuntres Acharon* [Appended Document] to Yalq on the Pentateuch (*BHM* VI, 81); GenR 75.6; 99.2 applies the blessing on Joseph (Deut 33,17) to the War Messiah.

(16) The identification of the prophets Elijah and Moses is attested in Jewish tradition. Yochanan ben Zakkai taught that the Holy One swore to Moses that, in the days of the Messiah, Moses and Elijah would come together ‘as one’ (DeutR 3.17). More frequently Elijah was seen as a descendant of Aaron (*Tg. Ps.-J. Exod* 40,10; *Pirkei Hekhalot Rabbati* 40.2 in *Batei Midrashot* [ed. S.A. WERTHEIMER] [Jerusalem 1952-55] I, 134) and sometimes identified with Phineas (G.F. MOORE, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* [Cambridge, Mass. 1927-30] II, 358n; and e.g. PRE 66b). But at SER 18 (ed. M. FRIEDMANN [Jerusalem 1969] 97-98) the sages regard him as an Aaronite while Elijah is a priest or a Benjamite, following 1 Chr 8,27.

(17) Texts with two or three deliverers are numerous (cf. n. 21 below). NumR 14.1 notes a view that there will be seven messiahs and tells of a Messiah from Manasseh. There was much scope for permutation.

be ruled out⁽¹⁸⁾, it is much more likely that both derive from an earlier common source. If that is so, this source must have been already established by the time of 4Q175, allowing us to trace the idea back perhaps to the mid-second century BCE.

3. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Exod 40,9-11*

Further confirmation of our proposal is provided by the *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Exod. 40,9-11.

9. You shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it; you shall consecrate it for the sake of the crown of the kingdom of the house of Judah, and of the King Messiah who is destined to redeem Israel at the end of days. 10. You shall anoint the altar of burnt offerings and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, and the altar will be most holy for the sake of the crown of the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, and of Elijah the high priest who is to be sent at the end of the exiles. 11. You shall anoint the laver and its base, and consecrate it for the sake of Joshua, your attendant, the head of the Sanhedrin of his people, by whose hand the land of Israel is to be divided, and of Messiah bar Ephraim, who will proceed from him, and by whose hand the house of Israel will vanquish Gog and his horde at the end of days.

Its lucid polypartite format lends the passage a testimonial quality similar to 4Q175 and the 'Four Craftsmen'. Its sections — three in this case — each pertain to different tribes or clans: Judah, Aaron, and Ephraim. Each section instructs that the tabernacle, its vessels and utensils should be anointed on behalf of representatives of one of these tribes. Each tribe has two sets of representatives: the first is, from the *meturgeman's* viewpoint, historical; the second, eschatological.

The three eschatological anointed ones are explicitly messianic. They are the King Messiah from Judah and Messiah bar Ephraim from Joshua, who are to come "at the end of days"; and Elijah the (anointed) high priest who is to come "at the end of the exiles". The presence of only three heroes, instead of the previous four, is surely because 'Elijah the high priest' fulfils both the prophetic and priestly roles. These two roles probably merged in the period after the Priest Messiah fell from grace⁽¹⁹⁾.

As for Messiah bar Ephraim, he is not merely Joshua's antitype, as in 4Q175, but his descendant, who shall "proceed" from him, as the King and Priest Messiahs do from Judah and Aaron. Being an Ephraimite, he is of course a Messiah ben Joseph. He is also a War Messiah, for he will conquer Gog and his hordes. The similarities to the previous passages are clear.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Direct dependence need not necessarily mean the 'Four Craftsmen' 4Q175. The latter may have been dependent on the former. I have suggested elsewhere that behind the 'Four Craftsmen' — as distinct from its tannaitic period expressions — date from temple times. This is seen from the prominent position of the Priest Messiah, who increasingly fell from favour during the century from the end of the Hasmonean dynasty (34 BCE) to the destruction of the temple (See MITCHELL, "Rabbi Dosa and the Rabbis Differ", 85-88).

⁽¹⁹⁾ See n. 18 above.

Diagram 2: Targum Ps.-J. to Exod 40; The Four Craftsmen; 4Q175

	Redeemer Figures			
4Q175	Prophet	King Messiah	Priest	Joshua, War Messiah ben Joseph
Four Craftsmen. Variant A	Prophet	King Messiah	Priest	War Messiah ben Joseph
Tg. Ps.-J. Exod 40,9-11	Elijah, the High Priest	King Messiah	(Elijah, the High Priest)	War Messiah ben Joshua ben Ephraim (ben Joseph)

As regards dating, this text would appear to date from perhaps a century after 4Q175⁽²⁰⁾. It would therefore be earlier than the majority of the trimessianic midrashim below, as its simplicity would also seem to attest.

Therefore this targum, like the 'Four Craftsmen', confirms our interpretation of 4Q175 by showing that polymessianic testimonia with a Josephite War Messiah were not unusual in ancient Israelite literature. Indeed, it seems they were something of a genre⁽²¹⁾.

4. Messianic Joshua

Finally, there is evidence that Joshua was seen as a messianic type in post-biblical Judaism. The white bull born in *1 En* 90.37-38 is widely recognized as a theriomorphic depiction of the Messiah⁽²²⁾. Since this first-born bull is followed in turn by a messianic wild ox or *rem* it appears that we have here the blessing of Joseph in Deut 33,17, the *firstborn of his bull* with

⁽²⁰⁾ Given the long period of *Pseudo-Jonathan's* redaction, each passage must be dated independently. This passage appears to date from between c. 30 BCE and 30 CE. The *terminus a quo* derives from the lack of a Priest Messiah, as opposed to a priest-prophet Elijah. This suggests a date after the Priest Messiah's eclipse began, in the latter part of the first century BCE (cf. n. 18). The *terminus ad quem* is seen from the fact that increasing Jewish antipathy to Yeshua of Nazareth would have precluded the invention of a Yehoshua Messiah in the Christian period.

⁽²¹⁾ TestXIIINaph 5.1-8 (apotheosized Levi, Judah, and Joseph). Many midrashim feature ben Joseph, Elijah and ben David (the first five are given in Heb. and Eng. in D.C. MITCHELL, *The Message of the Psalter* [JSOTSS 252; Sheffield 1997] 304-350): *Aggadot Mashiah*; *Otot ha-Mashiah* 7-9; *Sefer Zerubbabel*; *Asereth Melakhim*; *Pirkei Mashiah* 5-6 (Nehemiah ben Hushiel = ben Joseph; cf. n. 36); *Pirkei Hekhalot Rabbati* 39-40; *Tefillat Rav Shimon ben Yohai* (BHM IV.117-126); *Pereq Rav Yoshiyyahu* (BHM VI.112-116: 115); Saadia Gaon, *Kitab al Amanat* VIII.5 (*The Book of Beliefs and Opinions* [tr. S. ROSENBLATT] [New Haven 1948] 301-304). The *Zohar* depicts Bar Joseph-Ephraim, Bar David and Moses (Faithful Shepherd) in trio (B'reshit, 234; Mishpatim, 483; Pinhas, 582; Ki Tetze, 62, cf. 48). Bimessianic texts are too many to list. I have cited some in "Rabbi Dosa" and in "Les psaumes dans le Judaïsme rabbinique", *RTL* 36.2 (2005) 166-191.

⁽²²⁾ A. DILLMANN, *Das Buch Henoch* (Leipzig 1853) 286; M. BUTTENWIESER, "Messiah", *JE* VIII, 509; R.H. CHARLES, *The Book of Enoch* (Oxford 1893) 258, n. 1; F. MARTIN, *Le Livre d'Hénoch* (Paris 1906) 235, n. 37; E. ISAAC, "1 Enoch", *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (London 1983/85) I, 5; C.C. TORREY, *The Apocryphal Literature* (New Haven 1945) 112; "The Messiah Son of Ephraim", *JBL* 66 (1947) 266; J.T. MILIK, *The Books of Enoch* (Oxford 1976) 45; B. LINDARS, "A Bull, a Lamb and a Word: I Enoch xc.38", *NTS* 22 (1976) 485.

the horns of a *rem* who will gore all the nations⁽²³⁾. As Israelite literature habitually takes Deut 33.17 to represent Joseph, Ephraim, Joshua, or an eschatological Josephite-Ephraimite⁽²⁴⁾, it rather looks like the messianic bovid(s) of *1 En* 90.37-38 depict an eschatological Joshua⁽²⁵⁾.

If we turn next to *Sib. Or.* 5.256-259, we find "one who shall come again from heaven, a man pre-eminent...noblest of the Hebrews...who at one time did make the sun stand still"⁽²⁶⁾. Since Joshua is the only Bible figure to have made the sun stand still (Josh 10.12-14), the pre-eminent man seems again like an eschatological Joshua. Possible Christian influence hardly bears on the Jewishness of the text. For polymessianism and a Joshua Messiah, though known in Judaism, are unknown in standard Christian literature, whose Messiah is always a Judahite. If this writer was Christian, he was a thoroughly Jewish Christian⁽²⁷⁾.

Josephus tells how, during Nero's reign, a self-styled prophet appeared on the Mount of Olives and predicted that, like Joshua, he would make the city walls fall at his command⁽²⁸⁾. Since the Mount was renowned — from the time of Zech 14.4 — as the place of the Messiah's appearing, Josephus's prophet looks rather like an aspiring messianic Joshua⁽²⁹⁾.

A Targum on Exod 17.16 says that the Amalekites will be exterminated for three generations: in the generation of this world (by Joshua), in the generation of the Messiah, and in the generation of the world to come⁽³⁰⁾.

⁽²³⁾ Most commentators take Ethiopic *nagar* to mean the rem or wild ox. So DILLMAN, *Henoch*, 287-288; CHARLES, *Enoch*, 258-259; MARTIN, *Le livre d'Hénoch*, 235, n. 38; MILIK, *Books of Enoch*, 45; M.A. KNIBB, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch* (Oxford 1978) II, 216; TORREY, "Messiah the Son of Ephraim", 267.

⁽²⁴⁾ In biblical times the bull's horns are the symbol of the Ephraimites. They brag about having acquired horns for themselves (Amos 6.13) and sport iron horns to gore (*ngh*) the nations, as in Deut 33.17 (1 Kgs 22.11; 2 Chr 18.10). Deut 33.17 is applied to Joseph at GenR 75.12; 86.3; 95.1; 95 (MSV); 99.2; ExodR 1.16; 30.7; EstR 7.11; LamR on 2.3 §6; to Joshua at GenR 6.9; 39.11; 75.12; NumR 2.7; 20.4 (Israel under Joshua's command); Yalq. on Deut. 33.17 (§959); to ben Joseph at MTann 11.3 (ed. Buber, 102b); GenR 75.6; 95 (MSV); 99.2; PRE 22a.ii; AgBer §79; NumR 14.1; *Zohar*, Mishpatim, 479, 481, 483; Pinhas, 565, 567, 745; Ki Tetze, 21.62.

⁽²⁵⁾ TORREY, "Messiah Son of Ephraim", 267, also sees the *nagar-rem* as Messiah ben Joseph.

⁽²⁶⁾ O'Neill has shown that the "man pre-eminent" and the "noblest of the Hebrews" are the same person (J.C. O'NEILL, "The Man from Heaven: SibOr 5:256-259." *JSP* 9 [1991] 88-91).

⁽²⁷⁾ O'Neill notes the consensus that the author was a Jewish Christian, but proposes that the text is a Jewish oracle ("Man from Heaven", 87, 100).

⁽²⁸⁾ *Ant.* XX.viii.6 (ll. 169-170); *War* II.xiii.5 (ll. 261-263); the event is alluded to in Acts 21.38.

⁽²⁹⁾ The Messiah was seen as present in YHWH'S coming to the Mount in Zech 14.4 (MITCHELL, *Message*, 212-214, 264-266); cf. Acts 1.11-12; *Ma'aseh Daniel* (BHM V.117-130: 128). In temple times the Mount was known as *har ha-meshiha*, Mount of Anointing or — by Aramaic homophony — Mount of the Messiah (J. BRASLAVI — M. AVI-YONAH, "Mount of Olives", *EJ* XII, 483; Rashī and Kimhī on Zech 14.4). Often the appearance of the Holy One on the Mount directly precedes the coming of the Messiah (*Aggadot Mashiah* 28-34; *Sefer Zerubbabel* 50; *Pirquei Mashiah* §5-6; *Asereth Melakhim* §4). *Tg.* Cant 8.5 and Codex Reuchlinianus of *Tg.* Zech 14.4 make it the place of the resurrection of the dead, a messianic function (cf. MITCHELL, *Message*, 213).

⁽³⁰⁾ British Museum; Add. 27031: cited by O'NEILL, "Man from Heaven", 93. O'Neill presents other evidence for Joshua as a messianic type (91-94).

Belief in a messianic Joshua, who like his forebears Joseph and Joshua would live 110 years, is also attested among the Samaritans⁽³¹⁾. Samaritan texts are relatively late, but Crown suggests that these ideas can be safely traced back to the second century BCE⁽³²⁾.

Rabbinic texts also portray the Messiah — especially ben Joseph — as a second Joshua. Some state that Ben Joseph-Ephraim will be Joshua's descendant⁽³³⁾. Indeed this appears to be a genealogical necessity. There being only one stirps from Ephraim to Joshua (1 Chr 7,20-27), the Ephraimites had no princely line except through Joshua. Others present Ben Joseph as Joshua's antitype by applying to both figures the Josephite *rem* of Deut 33,17⁽³⁴⁾. Yet others describe his military exploits in terms of Joshua's destruction of Jericho with its unique falling walls. For instance, the midrash *Tefillat Rav Shimon ben Yohai*:

The bat-kol will say [to Messiah ben Joseph and his army]: "Just as Joshua did to Jericho and its ruler, so do to the nations of the world!" ... They recite the shema. They will encircle Jericho, and the wall will collapse at once⁽³⁵⁾.

Likewise, in the midrash *Pirquei Mashiah*, Israel under Nehemiah ben Hushiel — a pseudonym for Messiah ben Joseph — recite the *shema* and the walls of the city fall⁽³⁶⁾. The Roman-period *Aggadat Mashiah* contains a similar passage, the only difference being that the *bat-kol* addresses Ben Joseph's Ephraimite army in the period between his death and the coming of Ben David.

And Israel goes to Rome. And a bat-kol proclaims a third time, "Do to her as Joshua did to Jericho!" And they surround the city and blow the trumpets, and the seventh time they raise a battle-cry: 'Hear Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one!' [Deut 6.4]. And the walls of the city fall⁽³⁷⁾.

⁽³¹⁾ See A.D. CROWN, "Dositheans, Resurrection and a Messianic Joshua", *Antichthon* 1 (1967-1968) 85; "Samaritan Eschatology", *The Samaritans* (ed. CROWN) (Tübingen 1989) 266-292; J.A. MONTGOMERY, *The Samaritans* (New York 1907) 244-249; J. MACDONALD, *The Theology of the Samaritans* (New Testament Library; London 1964) 368.

⁽³²⁾ CROWN, "Samaritan Eschatology", 292.

⁽³³⁾ *Tg. Ps.-J.* Exod 40,11. The *meturgeman* clearly did not hold the belief of E.G. Hirsch and B. Pick ("Joshua", *JE* VII, 282-284) and advanced by Str-B II, 296, against Messiah ben Ephraim's Joshuanic descent, that Joshua married Rahab and died without male issue. But the proof-texts cited in *JE* for this idea (*Zeb.* 116b; *Meg.* 14a; *Yalq.*, Josh. §9) do not support the claim. (*Yalq.* Josh. §9 makes Rahab the ancestress of the Judahites of 1 Chr 4,21.) E.E. HALLEVY, "Joshua: In the Aggadah", *EJ* X, 266-267, notes Joshua's marriage to Rahab (*Meg.* 14b) but not his lack of male issue. Male issue is probably implied at AZ 25a, where the filling of the nations by Ephraim's seed (Gen 48,19) is said to have taken place at Joshua's conquest of the land (Josh 10,3).

⁽³⁴⁾ See GenR 6.9; 39.11; 75.12 with 75.6; 95 (MSV); 99.2; NumR 2.7 with 14.1.

⁽³⁵⁾ *BHM* IV.117-126: 123.

⁽³⁶⁾ *BHM* III.70-74; MITCHELL, *Message*, 325. The identification of Nehemiah ben Hushiel and ben Joseph is explicit at *Otot ha-Mashiah* §6-7 and *Hekhalot Rabbati* §39.1 and implicit at *Sef. Zerub.* 38-42; *TRSY* (*BHM* IV, 125); *Pereq R. Yoshiyahu* (*BHM* VI, 114-115); and *Pir. Mash.* §5.

⁽³⁷⁾ *Aggadat Mashiah* 33 (*BHM* III.141-143; MITCHELL, *Message*, 304-307, 335-336). The writer's desire for the destruction of Rome suggests an origin before the city's fall in

A similar passage occurs in *Pereq Rav Yoshiyahu*, where the presence of Nehemiah ben Hushiel (Messiah ben Joseph) in the battle, though not stated, is implied, for he is resurrected after it⁽³⁸⁾.

Space permitting, one might cite the host of Messiah ben Joseph-Ephraim texts from all periods. For, as noted, genealogy requires the Ephraim Messiah to be Joshua's son too. But enough has been said to make our case.

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* * *

I suggest that the Joshua of *4Q175* represents a messianic deliverer. Such an interpretation has the advantage of providing an explanation for the whole text, not simply the first three-quarters. It would seem to be confirmed by other polymessianic testimonia featuring a Joshua-Josephite Messiah, such as the 'Four Craftsmen' *baraita* and the *Tg.Ps.-J.* Exod 40,9-11. The likelihood of a common source for these texts allows us to suppose that these ideas were established before the writing of *4Q175* in c. 100 BCE. We also noted evidence of a continuous tradition of Joshua as a messianic type; some of these texts — particularly *1 En* 90.37-38 — can also be dated to the mid-second century BCE⁽³⁹⁾.

As regards comparison with the War Messiah ben Joseph of rabbinic literature, it does not appear that the *4Q175* figure possesses the full endowments of the rabbinic one. There is no mention, for instance, of the key Messiah ben Joseph characteristic, violent death. Nonetheless both are Josephite War Messiahs, and so it would appear that the Qumran figure may well be an earlier form of the rabbinic one. This has implications for dating the development of Messiah ben Joseph.

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SUMMARY

Commentators recognize a tri-polar messianism in *4Q175*, based on the first three sections of the text. But the last section suggests that the text is in fact tetra-messianic, featuring an eschatological Joshua. This is confirmed by similarities between *4Q175*, the tetra-messianic 'Four Craftsmen' *baraita*, and *Targ. Ps.-J.* to Exod. 40,9-11; as well as by evidence that Joshua was a messianic type in post-biblical Judaism.

455 CE. Jellinek suggests that the simplicity of the midrash also shows its antiquity (*BHM* III:xxviii).

⁽³⁸⁾ *BHM* VI, 112-116: 114-115.

⁽³⁹⁾ The text is usually dated to c. 165 BCE; see ISAAC, "1 Enoch", 7; P.A. TILLER, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch* (Atlanta 1993) 78-79.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Keith N. GRÜNEBERG, *Abraham, Blessing and the Nations*. A Philological and Exegetical Study of Genesis 12:3 in its Narrative Context (BZAW 332). Berlin – New York, Walter de Gruyter, 2003, xii-296 p. 15 × 23,5

Un tal lavoro costituisce la pubblicazione della dissertazione dottorale dell'Autore difesa presso l'Università di Durham e moderata da R.W.L. Moberly. Lo studio si caratterizza sin da subito colorato da una peculiarità: quella di prendere le distanze dalle posizioni palesemente assunte dal proprio moderatore circa la centralità della tematica affrontata.

Si tratta del dibattito tutt'altro che pacificato a proposito dell'interpretazione del verbo בִּרְךְ al *niphal* (וַיְבָרֶכְהוּ) in Gn 12,3b. Sono sostanzialmente tre, infatti, le valenze con cui abitualmente si tenta di risolvere una simile modalità: quella *passiva* («saranno benedette in te tutte le famiglie della terra»); quella *riflessiva* («si benediranno in te tutte le famiglie della terra»); quella *media* («acquisteranno benedizione in te tutte le famiglie della terra»), pur non essendo, quest'ultima, eccessivamente dissimile dalla valenza riflessiva.

Come conseguente e inevitabile corollario ad un tal tipo di argomenti, K.N. Grüneberg si occupa anche della decodificazione ermeneutica con cui avvicinarsi alla preposizione ב (בְּךָ) di Gn 12,3b, termine ultimo di origine e/o di orientamento della benedizione in oggetto. L'Autore appronta un triplice vaglio di possibilità (182-186): l'opportunità che una tal preposizione introduca il *complemento d'agente*, ovviamente nel solo caso dell'interpretazione passiva del verbo («da te»), opportunità invero remota per un tal tipo di preposizione; l'eventualità che sia portatrice di un significato *strumentale* («per mezzo di te»); la probabilità che sia da considerarsi nella sua letteralità («in te»).

Sulla prosecuzione di tali inchieste, Grüneberg si interroga naturalmente anche sul *destinatario* ultimo della promessa: per chi è formulata la promessa di benedizione? Per Abramo o per le famiglie della terra? Chi ne è il vero beneficiario?

Secondo i risultati raggiunti nelle sue analisi, Grüneberg si risolve per stabilire un significato passivo per il verbo (spec. 180-182) e una sfumatura strumentale per la preposizione (184) («All the families of the earth *shall be blessed through you*»), *contra* Moberly che aveva prese più volte le difese dell'interpretazione *riflessiva* (cf., ad esempio, R.W.L. Moberly, *The Bible, Theology and Faith*. A Study of Abraham and Jesus [Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine; Cambridge, UK 2000] 123). L'unico punto di parziale

continuità con Moberly risiede nell'intercettare in Abramo (Israele) il destinatario ultimo della promessa (cf. Moberly, *The Bible*, 123, 125-126): la benedizione per Abramo consisterebbe proprio nel potere che avrebbe di benedire tutti gli altri, tutte le famiglie della terra (179, 244).

Occorre altresì precisare che il significato passivo del verbo è quello verso il quale si dirigono anche alcune importanti versioni: si vedano i LXX (ἐνευλογηθήσονται; si vedano ugualmente le sue citazioni in Atti 3,25 e Gal 3,8; cf. anche Sir 44,21 [ἐνευλογηθήναι; il ms "B" del Cairo, invece, ha il solo לְבָרַךְ]), la Vulgata (*benedicentur*) e i Targumin Neophyti 1, Pseudo-Jonathan, Onqelos e Frammentario nel ms. 264 (וַיְבָרֶכֶן).

Per raggiungere simili posizioni, l'Autore articola il suo studio secondo una ripartizione ordinata in nove tappe, a sua volta suddivise in molteplici sezioni. Nel capitolo introduttivo (1-12) Grüneberg si impegna in alcune considerazioni circa il metodo con cui ha inteso affrontare un simile studio. Asserisce di rivolgersi alla e di interpretare la *forma finale del testo* (3), senza voler tentare di determinare né l'intenzione del suo autore né la comprensione del suo "lettore implicito". Definisce pertanto il suo lavoro come uno studio eminentemente sincronico (4-6, 11-12). L'interlocutore privilegiato in questa fase preliminare del lavoro, con cui si entra in buona parte in contraddittorio, è D.M. Carr (cf. *Reading the Fractures of Genesis*. Historical and Literary Approaches [Louisville, KY 1996]). Il presupposto di un simile lavoro consisté, all'opposto di quello di Grüneberg, nel tributare particolare importanza all'analisi diacronica nella lettura della forma finale della Genesi, al fine di evidenziare e di esplicitare le fratture e le relative suture presenti all'interno della sua trama narrativa (cf. anche la recensione di J.L. Ska, *Bib* 79 [1998] 120-124). Grüneberg rigetta con fermezza un tale assunto: se un lettore dovesse percepire "fratture" nell'ordito narrativo del testo dovrebbe semplicemente mantenerle e rispettarle senza impegnarsi nel formulare ipotesi di sorta sulle loro origini (7); ipotesi che potrebbero altresì distrarre l'attenzione dalla forma finale del testo (10). Uno studio diacronico può solo e semplicemente attirare l'attenzione verso ciò che *ora* il testo non dice più (10).

Dati simili assunti si possono facilmente arguire le focalizzazioni che si sdipanano nei successivi capitoli del lavoro: il tutto della dissertazione si basa esclusivamente sull'osservazione del testo *qua talis*, con particolare abbondanza di sottolineature filologiche, sintattiche e grammaticali.

In questo modo, il secondo capitolo (13-33) inerisce ad alcuni paralleli scritturistici che l'Autore ravvisa con Gn 12,3a (segnatamente Gn 27,29b e Nm 24,9b); il terzo (34-66) ad una trattazione sull'uso del *niphal* nella lingua ebraico-biblica, ampiamente attingendo agli studi di S. Kemmer, *The Middle Voice* (Typological Studies in Language 23; Amsterdam 1993); il quarto (67-89) ad alcuni paralleli di Gn 12,3b che impiegano il *niphal* (le uniche occorrenze di בָּרַךְ al *niphal* nell'AT: Gn 18,18; 28,14); il quinto (90-122) al ravvisamento dei possibili significati che in ebraico possono assumere i derivati della radice בָּרַךְ. Solo dopo aver passate in rassegna simili tematiche, Grüneberg si accinge a trattare direttamente, in un sesto capitolo (123-190), la *crux* di Gn 12,3: prima contestualizzandola nella più ampia prospettiva di Gn 1-11, poi, come ultimo preliminare, approntando uno studio sintattico di Gn 12,1-3. Raggiunta l'acme del lavoro, un settimo capitolo (191-221) dedicato ad uno studio sullo *hithpael* ebraico, un ottavo (222-241) focalizzante sul rav-

visamento di alcuni paralleli a Gn 12,3b che impiegano lo *hithpael* (in particolare, Gn 22,18 e Gn 26,4) e un ultimo di conclusione (242-246) cedono il passo alla bibliografia e ad un indice di citazioni scritturistiche.

Vorrei al proposito approntare due generi di considerazioni.

1) Ad un esame complessivo del lavoro è il capitolo terzo (34-66), quello dedicato allo studio del *niphal* nella letteratura ebraico-biblica, ad essere decisamente centrale per appoggiare e sostenere la tesi di una sua lettura passiva in Gn 12,3b. I toni cauti e sfumati assunti da Grüneberg e, quindi, ben rispettosi dei testi e delle svariate posizioni interpretative assunte a loro riguardo dall'esegesi medievale in avanti, tuttavia, mal non si prestano a far valutare la non eccessiva robustezza di certe sue asserzioni. È lo stesso autore, infatti, a richiamare l'uso del *niphal* come un *marker* per significati "riflessivi-indiretti", specialmente in unione a particolari verbi, quali, ad esempio, quelli derivati dalle radici שָׁמַר, אָחַז, שָׁאֵל (46-56, 62-65). Un tal tipo di valenza del *niphal*, del resto, viene sempre rimarcata anche da qualsiasi buona grammatica della lingua ebraica. Pure solo partendo da questa semplice base, dunque, non si vede per qual motivo anche il verbo derivato dalla radice בָּרַךְ in questione non debba partecipare della medesima sfumatura. Tanto più che, secondo diversi studi in merito, nello sviluppo della lingua — e, dunque, in epoche più recenti di composizione — l'assimilazione del *niphal* allo *hithpael* (nella sua comprensione *riflessiva*) si fece sempre più evidente (cf. E. Qimron, *The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls* [Harvard Semitic Studies 29; Atlanta, GA 1986] 49; B.K. Waltke – M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, IN 1990] 23.4h, copiosamente citato da Grüneberg, quest'ultimo, anche se, per quel che mi è stato possibile constatare, mai a proposito del luogo qui menzionato).

È proprio a questo riguardo che gli assunti metodologici dell'Autore spiegati nel primo capitolo del suo lavoro (1-12) risultano almeno in parte inadeguati all'argomento centrale della tesi. Uno studio prettamente sincronico si trova forse non sempre idoneo a vagliare prospettive decisamente grammaticali e sintattiche così massicciamente presenti in questo studio. Risulta difatti impossibile, visti la qualità e il tenore degli argomenti trattati, non entrare in colloquio anche con l'evoluzione dell'uso della lingua e, quindi, parimenti, con la relativa datazione di certi passi. Testi come Gn 12,3 (בָּרַךְ, *niphal*), Gn 22,18 (בָּרַךְ, *hithpael*) e Gn 26,4 (בָּרַךְ, *hithpael*), presentati in contrapposizione da Grüneberg (cf. cc. 4 e 8), sono ormai da vario tempo riconosciuti con buoni argomenti dall'esegesi storico-critica essere molto tardivi, abbondantemente post-esilici e, dunque, da questo punto d'osservazione, in concomitanza con le recenti epoche di assimilazione delle due modalità verbali in questione verso la *nuance* riflessiva. Al riguardo si potrebbero qui citare per Gn 12,3: J.L. Ska, «L'appel d'Abraham et l'acte de naissance d'Israël (Gn 12,1-4a)», *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomic Literature*. FS. C.H.W. Breckelmans (eds. M. Vervenne – J. Lust) (BETL 133; Leuven 1997) 367-389; per Gn 22,18, lo stesso moderatore della dissertazione di Grüneberg: R.W.L. Moberly, «The Earliest Commentary on the Akedah», VT 38 (1988) 302-323; per Gn 26,4, L. Schmidt, «Die Darstellung Isaaks in Genesis 26,1-33 und ihr Verhältnis zu den Parallelen in den Abrahamerzählungen», in Id., *Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Pentateuch* (BZAW 263; Berlin – New York 1998) 167-223, spec. 169 e n. 12.

Del resto, la lingua ebraica conosce l'uso ben attestato del *pu'al* o del *qal* passivo per veicolare un senso strettamente passivo dell'azione espressa dal verbo (se l'uso di בִּרְךָ al *qal* passivo nella Bibbia ebraica non è attestato, non così per il *pu'al*: cf. Nm 22,6; Dt 33,13; Gdc 5,24; 2 Sam 7,29; 1 Cr 17,27; Gb 1,21; Sal 37,22; 112,2; 113,2; 128,4; Pr 20,21; 22,9). Fra l'altro, anche alcuni paralleli al contesto di benedizione così come viene espresso in Gn 12,3b sembrano favorire l'interpretazione riflessiva, usando il verbo בִּרְךָ allo *hith-pael* seguito, come in Gn 12,3b, dalla preposizione כִּי: Sal 72,17 e Ger 4,2. Ma pure luoghi come Gn 48,20 (con בִּרְךָ); Rt 4,11-12 e Ger 29,22 paiono assecondare un medesimo senso riflessivo: il nome autorevole e *benedetto* di una determinata persona (YHWH, il re...) viene usato da altri (Israele, le nazioni...) per benedirsi (cf. già H. Gunkel, *Genesis* [HKAT 1,1; Göttingen³ 1910; 1977] 165; per alcune ulteriori sottolineature si veda anche E. Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* [WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984] 349-359).

2) Secondo questo genere di evincimenti, ha ben ragione Grüneberg ad argomentare in consonanza col proprio moderatore che in Gn 12,3 debba essere su «Abramo» e non sulle «famiglie della terra» a cadere l'accento; come a dire: «Che noi, famiglie tutte della terra, ci benediciamo l'un l'altra così come Abramo è stato da YHWH benedetto». In questo senso Gn 12,3 si troverebbe a sottolineare come tutta la terra dovrà arrivare a riconoscere quanto Abramo sia stato benedetto da Dio. Il peso, immancabilmente, viene a posarsi ancora una volta sull'elezione del patriarca e non tanto sull'universalità della benedizione a tutte le nazioni (*contra, in primis*, G. von Rad, *Das formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuch* [BWANT 78; Stuttgart 1938] 60-62). In conseguenza di queste asserzioni anche il כִּי di Gn 12,3 non necessariamente esige di rivestirsi del *solo* significato strumentale, come Grüneberg sostiene (184): anche il più semplice e letterale "in te" (stato in luogo figurato) non mi pare dovrebbe essere a-prioristicamente rigettato (per limitarsi alla sola costruzione *niphal* + כִּי si potrebbero menzionare Dt 18,10; Gdc 20,12; 1 Sam 25,28; Ez 20,41; 36,23; 38,16).

Nonostante questo genere di sottolineature il libro di Grüneberg risulta sicuramente di esempio per il modo equilibrato, corretto e moderato con cui affronta i testi e gli argomenti. Al di là delle personali conclusioni non sempre condivisibili i suoi toni appaiono spesso pacati, prudenti e rispettosi. Mai rigidi o taglienti. Occorre infatti non dimenticare la sfuggevolezza e la non completa afferrabilità della problematica grammaticale e sintattica in oggetto.

Un deciso merito di un tale studio è anche quello di aver illustrato con dovizia di autori e di posizioni — seppure a volte correndo il rischio di illustrare l'*obscurum per obscurius* — uno dei luoghi narrativi più importanti dell'intera Bibbia ebraica: il portale che dà l'accesso alle narrazioni patriarcali e, per le sue conseguenze, all'intero destino del popolo fuoriuscito dai lombi di Abramo (cf. Eb 7,10). Un fatale refuso esattamente nell'ultimo rigo del lavoro proprio a riguardo di uno dei termini-chiave dell'intero studio (246: «promswises» in luogo di «promises») interviene a guastare una lettura altrimenti chiara e scorrevole.

Nathan MACDONALD, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of "Monotheism"* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe 1). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2003. ix-271 p. 15,5 × 23. €49.

MacDonald's monograph is a welcome addition to the recent literature that discusses the development of monotheism in ancient Israel. Unlike other participants in the debate, he undertakes a very circumscribed topic for consideration — the nature of monotheism in the book of Deuteronomy. His is a nuanced position; he maintains that modern critical scholars have approached the biblical text incorrectly. We have brought a modern post-enlightenment definition to the biblical text and thus have failed to appreciate the true nature of monotheism confessed by the ancient Israelites in general and expressed in the book of Deuteronomy in particular. We have viewed monotheism as "a truth to be comprehended, not a relationship in which to be committed" (97). There is much truth in what he says, and his insights provide depth to the scholarly discussion.

Pursuant to his discussion of the biblical text, he gives critical consideration to seven select scholars who have reflected upon the nature of monotheism in ancient Israel: Wellhausen, Kuenen, Albright, Kaufmann, von Rad, Gnuse, and Dietrich. (I must admit that his evaluation of my volume was exceptionally insightful.) MacDonald is somewhat critical of all, save von Rad, whose views of Israelite monotheism in the context of religious faith and commitment are quite comparable to MacDonald's own point of departure.

MacDonald attends to significant passages in Deuteronomy (Deut 4,35; 4,39; 5,7 — first commandment, 6,4 — the Shema, and 32,39, among others), and discerns that behind the appearance of monotheistic belief in these testimonies, the old gods still lurk. For the passion in the biblical imperative to worship Yahweh exclusively makes sense only if belief in the other gods remains a viable option for people. (Nor is there some form of poly-Yahwism which requires refutation, for the Yahweh of Samaria, the Yahweh of Teman, and others are but manifestations of the same god.) He begins his analysis with the Shema and its various possible interpretations, for this exhortation sets the tone for the final canonical shape of Deuteronomy. Scholarly interpretations of Deut 4,35 and 4,39 often suppose that these texts lead the reader to view Deut 5,7 and 6,4 in monotheistic perspective, but not so, says MacDonald. The statement, "there is no other god", really means there is no other god for Israel, not that there is no other god in the cosmos. Of course, MacDonald's reading is subjective, as are the readings of the scholars that he opposes, but he presents a very logical argument for his own interpretation.

MacDonald ultimately concludes that there is no real monotheism in Deuteronomy, as we would understand the concept today, but rather a religious devotion exclusively committed to Yahweh. (On this he particularly disagrees with the arguments of Braulik and Rechenmacher.) For Israelites, Yahweh was the one, unique deity; there was no other god in the heavens with whom they could have a deep commitment. For this commitment to be real, the threat of other gods had to exist in the mind of the author of Deuteronomy. Yahweh is one, because of the divine election of Israel and continued divine faithfulness.

MacDonald turns this notion about in various ways by discussing religious commitment from diverse vantage points, stressing certain themes: 1) Israel expressed exclusive commitment with total "love", which MacDonald evaluates in the light of parallel expressions found in the ancient Near East and the Bible. Even the wartime "ban" was an expression of love, as people devoted all war gains to Yahweh even to their own economic disadvantage. 2) Israel "remembered" Yahweh and the saving actions of the past, as well as the divine will expressed in the commands of the Torah, which imply the deep dependence of Israel upon Yahweh. Israel had to "remember" their exclusive commitment to Yahweh, because their monotheism was not an attained intellectual level of insight which could never be lost, it was a commitment which indeed could be forgotten. 3) Yahweh's "election" of the people in the patriarchal and exodus accounts linked people and deity so tightly together, that Yahweh became the unique deity for Israel, and this resulted in the observation of special customs which created Israel's sense of holiness and separation. 4) Israel espoused "aniconism" out of devotion to Torah, for Yahweh was present in commands, not material images, and thus the invisible presence of Yahweh was the powerful parallel concept along with Yahweh's uniqueness.

Though MacDonald critiques other scholars in the field, his thesis is not diametrically opposed to theirs. Scholars such as Bernard Lang, Mark Smith, and myself would agree that Deuteronomy does not espouse monotheism in the way that modern Jews and Christians would understand it. More importantly, we would all agree with MacDonald that the faith statements in Deuteronomy should be understood in terms of exclusive religious devotion, not in terms of intellectual acknowledgment. It is good, however, that MacDonald has taken the effort to focus so clearly on one important set of texts or one stage in Israel's religious development to make these points so clearly. Often sweeping paradigms may not do full justice to one particular stage of religious evolution. MacDonald has done that; he has provided nuance to the discussion. Not only has he attempted to give clear focus to the religious perspectives on Deuteronomy concerned with devotion to "one, unique" God, but he has given us all fair warning that scholarly assessment of other aspects of Israel's monotheism must attempt to perceive what the texts are clearly saying without consciously or unconsciously imposing too many of our modern intellectual categories. On the other hand, were I to "nuance" MacDonald's viewpoints with my own apologia, I would say that sometimes it is necessary to view the Old Testament with modern categories in order to allow the ancient texts to speak a necessary and valuable message to the contemporary world. Such was the task I undertook with my volume, *The Old Testament and Process Theology* (St. Louis 2000), a work which combined Old Testament thought with the contemporary philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, and also a work which flowed from my 1997 volume on Israel's monotheism. Perhaps, we sometimes must impose modern intellectual categories on the biblical text in a circumspect way, so that we may allow the biblical text to speak our concerns with the aid of modern thought.

Perhaps, we might perceive that there are two issues at stake in MacDonald's critique when he declares that we must not analyze Israel's religious identity in modern intellectual assumptions. On the one hand, he

critiques scholars for not paying closer attention to the various biblical passages (and specific books, like Deuteronomy) so as to construct their understandings more sensitively to the mode of thought evident in the text. On this score he is correct, and his critique is worth heeding in future research. On the other hand, he appears to criticize also the use of modern intellectual paradigms in understanding the developmental process of Israel's beliefs. (He cannot deny that there was some form of developmental process; otherwise we would never have gotten from their worldview to our worldview.) Our modern paradigms, such as my concept of "processual evolutionary advance", may not have been an intellectual category used by the ancients, but that does not mean it is not an apt paradigm to use in order to describe what happened. (They did not understand gravity, but they had it then as surely as we do today.) Modern paradigms can be useful in describing the past in a meaningful way for the present. Yes, indeed, we tend to define monotheism too often as intellectual acknowledgement of the existence of one god rather than deep devotion to one deity, especially in our references to Deuteronomy and more often to Second Isaiah, but that does not vitiate the entire paradigm of development, because at some point that intellectual acknowledgement of a sole deity's existence did emerge. But let me not quibble too much with MacDonald, for he might agree with me on these issues as much as I agree with him on his particular agenda.

Finally, MacDonald's volume is a valuable contribution to the discussion because it is also a fine example of biblical theology, a truly insightful exposition of some of the significant themes in the book of Deuteronomy, accompanied by a fine, detailed exposition of crucial passages in the book. Were I to change anything in his monograph, I would have been pleased to see him respond critically in greater detail to the excellent work of Bernard Lang, Morton Smith, Mark Smith, and maybe even archaeologist William Dever, scholars who have contributed significantly to the discussion of Israelite monotheism by providing significant paradigms of Israel's religious development. But perhaps that would have enlarged the volume unduly. This book is highly recommended for all who are interested in the debate concerning biblical monotheism and the larger study of Israel's religious identity.

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Jan P. FOKKELMAN, *Major Poems of the Hebrew Bible. At the Interface of Prosody and Structural Analysis. Volume III: The Remaining 65 Psalms* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 43). Assen, Royal Van Gorcum, 2003. 446 p. × 24,5. €95

In this third volume of his planned 4 volume series Fokkelman continues his colometric analysis of the 65 psalms not treated in Vol. II. This is the first volume which does not include some mixture of poems from two or more

biblical books. Volume I treated Exodus 15, Deuteronomy 32 and Job 3. Volume IV will deal with Job 15–42. Volume II included Job 4–14 as well as 85 of the 150 psalms. The 85 psalms treated in Vol. II shared a single symmetrical feature. All 85 averaged a set number of syllables per colon — usually 8 but also either 7 or 9 syllables per colon. The 65 psalms treated in chapters 2 through 11 of this volume fall outside the range of 7 to 9 syllables per colon. Fokkelman maintains that in the absence of metrical precision on the level of cola, the psalms in Volume III display “numerical perfection” (11) on various other levels. This may involve word counts, numbers of syllables per word, and numeric parallels from strophe to strophe. In the previous volume, defenses were made for Fokkelman’s manner of counting pre-Masoretic syllables. In the current work he admits that while syllable counting is relatively straightforward, identifying cola and number of cola per verse has proven more problematic (11). With Psalms, in particular, tricola are frequent. Three factors lent evidence for his divisions into cola and verses. First, syllable counts of cola and verses; second, attention to the parallel structures of lines; and third, reflecting on the interplay between sentence structure and verse structure.

Fokkelman characterizes his approach throughout the multi-volume work in the following terms: “The *Major Poems* series is a plea for a clean and consistent poetics, and for the primogeniture of its method, as opposed to intellectualist and sometimes text-inimical approaches to poetry arising from form, tradition or redaction-historical premises that are largely hypothetical and will remain so” (12). He presumes that interpretation should begin on the micro-level of syllable and line, and only after a thorough review at this level proceed to larger concerns of strophic structure and meaning. His system is entirely eclectic, involving pre-Masoretic syllable counting; calculations of numbers of strophes, verses, cola, words, and beats within the poem; determinations of metrical stress patterns; and of course, indications of various parallel patterns among lines.

A few pages of the initial chapter of Vol. II are devoted to an investigation of the structure of Proverbs 15. With this brief analysis, he lends weight to his method by showing that even after Proverbs 9, an amazing degree of structural symmetry can be found in chapters of Proverbs that have been treated as collections of miscellany. The review shows that the whole of Proverbs 15 is built around the single statement of verse 17: “Better is a dinner of vegetables where love is than a fatted ox and hatred with it” (NRSV). Proverbs 15 presents the message that love and reason combine to constitute wisdom. Other dialectical terms such as life and death, or wisdom and folly are set behind this larger polarity. The theme is communicated within a framework of twelve lines of staircase parallelism with verse 17 at its center. The parallel vocabulary evident in the reproduction of the staircase structure on page 13 is most convincing. Complementing the staircase structure, there are five stanzas of three strophes each: verses 1-7, verses 8-15, verses 16-21, verses 22-27, and verses 28-33.

The study of Proverbs 15 ends with the unexpected comment on the understanding that love and reason must combine to achieve wisdom: “This kind of teaching is unfortunately rare in the groves of Academe” (17). Was the author actually commenting on pedagogy or responding to the lack of

humane sensitivity in university settings? Assuming the latter, it is indeed unfortunate that the skills related to academic specialization are sometimes set within the context of detached “science” rather than within the framework of the interpersonal relationships upon which teaching and learning must be based. In addition, much of our institutional thinking builds on the model of competition, identifies winners and losers, and measures all in terms of profit and loss. Reason (as understood by Western thinkers) implies this sort of competition. Some ideas are “better” than others and some are “right” while others are “wrong”. When standards of reason are applied, these conclusions make perfect sense. At some point, however, reason can become vindictive or cruel when not tempered by love.

Following this introductory material, the psalms within each chapter are arranged sequentially and often have nothing else in common. The superscription, “song of ascents”, common to all the psalms treated in chapter 11, appears in the title of the chapter but without discussion of any general content or structure that the psalms within this grouping may share. More than in previous volumes, the author emphasizes the metrical arrangement of particular psalms rather than larger patterns shared among several poetic units. To some degree this emphasis is dictated by the nature of the Book of Psalms itself, since its units are in fact more independent than those of Job, for example. However, many other scholars assume intentional editorial shaping is a general feature of the Psalms. This applies on two primary levels, first the canonical shape of the entire book and second the editorial arrangement of the books within certain portions of the Psalter. For example, it would be interesting to investigate the relative structure and content of the Korah and Asaph psalms which comprise much of Book 3 of the Psalms. It would be easy enough to review the syllable counts Fokkelman provides and look for averages and patterns. Yet the semantic patterns and other investigations of the macrostructure of such subgroups could also yield data that furthers the understanding of both individual psalms and the book as a whole.

For good reason, the most lengthy treatment interprets Psalm 119. Fokkelman finds that “the ‘octavic’ aspect of the song is supported by a numerical aspect. The average number of syllables per stanza in this poem is exactly 130” (235). Each eight line unit contains sixteen cola, and these build into four strophes, and finally, two substanzas for each of the 22 stanzas. Fokkelman treats each stanza as a unit in itself, though not as independent poems. Throughout the poem, he tracks the appearance and use of eight norm words (“torah” and related vocabulary). He also notes a balance in terms of the number of references to the psalmist and the number of references to the deity. The distribution of syllable counts per cola in Psalm 119 appear similar to the distribution for the entire Psalter — revealing a definite preference for syllable counts from 7 to 9.

The study of Psalm 119 concludes with Fokkelman’s reactions to David Noel Freedman’s syllable counting of the psalm in “The Structure of Psalm 119” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells. Studies in Biblical, Jewish and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (eds. D.P. Wright – D.N. Freedman – A. Hurvitz) (Winona Lake, IN 1995). Freedman offered two counts (low and high) whereas Fokkelman applies a “fixed recipe... [which yields] one single set of unambiguous figures” (270). Due to

the occurrence of tricola Fokkelman considers the average syllables per colon more important than the average syllables per verse. Throughout all volumes Fokkelman maintains that the poet aims at an average of eight syllables per colon, compensating for absence of perfect symmetry by providing patterns of average counts for the whole poem.

Chapter 12 contains a very limited overview of the poesis of the 65 psalms, actually a reiteration of matters introduced on page 11. Also present in chapter 12 is a provocative table (326) which charts the frequency of cola lengths within the book of Psalms. Fokkelman finds that 3720 cola of the psalms reveal patterns of 7, 8, and 9 syllable length. The most common length is 8 but this length only outnumbers cola of 7 and 9 syllable length by margins of 300 and 400, respectively. Much less frequent are the patterns of 10, 11, and 12 syllables per colon (only 930 cola) and patterns of 4, 5, and 6 (only 999 cola). As might be expected, cola shorter than four syllables are rare. Cola longer than 12 syllables appear in 55 instances according to Fokkelman's count. This broad sweep of the psalms certainly indicates a predisposition toward cola of 7 to 9 syllables. It falls short of an affirmation of the number 8 as an absolute ideal, since there are more cola of 7 and 9 counts combined than cola of 8 counts. The presence of a significant minority of longer cola (approximately one per cent of all cola) reveals the flaw in any terms of numerical certainty, since a pattern that can vary one out of a hundred times cannot be considered rigid in its application. Actually, the table shows little more than the propensity toward 7-9 syllables per line. This constitutes something approaching "hard evidence" of the approximate sense of balance the psalmists and their editors employed.

Appendices include a full list of all syllable counts for all 150 psalms even though 65 of these were provided in Vol. 2. The inclusion of all is helpful both for the purpose of comparisons and due to some typographical errors contained in Vol. II.

For this writer's review of Volume I, see *Biblica* 81 (2000) 271-275. For Vol. II see *Biblica* 83 (2002) 115-118. Since the production of Vol. II, Fokkelman has produced two additional resources: *Reading Biblical Poetry. An Introductory Guide* (Louisville 2001), and *The Psalms in Form. The Hebrew Psalter in its Poetic Shape* (Leiderdorp, Netherlands 2003). *The Psalms in Form* reproduces the Hebrew text of the Psalms printed in accordance with the poetic structure Fokkelman discerned for each psalm. *Reading Biblical Poetry* provides a general introduction to the interpretation of poetry, highlighting Fokkelman's method of counting syllables and noting lines.

The syllable counts provided in these volumes will serve scholars best as data for the investigation of individual psalms. In keeping with Fokkelman's suggestion that such reckoning is preliminary to other perspectives on the poetic unit, perhaps colometric analysis should be considered a background method, which on the text-critical level provides data to constrain and guide additional interpretive steps. The measures of syllables per line and resulting divisions into verses and larger units remain the heart of this study's contribution to biblical poetics. These overviews are generally insufficient, in themselves, to map the integrated structures of individual psalms. The author does indeed note additional rhetorical features, so this is not intended

as a criticism of his approach. The warning is against over reliance on numeric patterns. These are more helpful as guidelines to a more thorough investigation of specific poetic units. Certainly, for the reader who is providing comprehensive examinations of isolated psalms, a more detailed analysis of several select psalms would be more useful than such numeric analyses of all Psalms. A good example of a more exhaustive treatment is the consideration of Deuteronomy 32 in Vol. I. In general, the counts and divisions of lines will provide a most helpful index for all who engage in interpretation of Hebrew poetry.

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Novum Testamentum

Elisa ESTÉVEZ LÓPEZ, *El poder de una mujer creyente. Cuerpo, identidad y discipulado en Mc 5,24b-34*. Un estudio desde las ciencias sociales (Asociación Bíblica Española. Monografías 40). Estella, Editorial Verbo Divino, 2003. 497 p. 16 × 24.

L'apporto alla ricerca esegetica che l'Autrice si prefigge di ottenere, passa attraverso un notevole sforzo preliminare atto a "sviscerare" il significato della guarigione della donna malata di emorragia, nel quadro di credenze circa sistema di protezione della salute condiviso nell'area mediterranea coeva al NT. Su quest'orizzonte di lettura, si innesta quindi lo sforzo di "evidenziare" i significati specifici che Marco ha inserito nella rielaborazione del racconto tradizionale, per illuminare la situazione vitale della comunità autoriale e la sua posizione relativa rispetto al più ampio contesto. Si tratta dunque di operare prima una contestualizzazione rispetto ai modelli culturali e quindi una ricostruzione del processo letterario del racconto fino alla sua fissazione nel II vangelo, al fine di ottenere dall'interazione delle due prospettive una ulteriore comprensione del testo biblico.

Dopo la rassegna della "scarsa" produzione specifica, la Estévez López evidenzia la ridottissima attenzione che il testo ha avuto dal punto di vista socio-religioso e raccomanda così una sua nuova contestualizzazione. A tale scopo appronta un modello "euristico" per larghissima parte debitore alla ricerca di antropologia culturale circa il sistema di protezione della salute (*sistema del cuidado de la salud*) nel mondo mediterraneo antico. Dato anche l'oggetto della ricerca, che vede al centro una donna e la sua malattia tipicamente femminile, è pure evidente il taglio "di genere" assunto dall'A. L'idea di fondo che innerva la ricostruzione postula come

non sia la realtà biologica che determina l'infermità, quanto piuttosto i criteri elaborati collettivamente (73), a proposito dell'eziologia e della valutazione della malattia, come pure della definizione dei ruoli legittimamente implicati nel processo sanitario.

Probabilmente ricondurre la malattia alla sola componente culturale, può risultare una forzatura — di fatto gli agenti patogeni non sono una novità recente — tuttavia l'istanza merita particolare attenzione rispetto alla prospettiva contemporanea che di fatto tende a ridurre la malattia a puri meccanismi biologici, cosa estranea al mondo del I sec.

La ricostruzione del contesto socio-culturale circa la salute femminile, occupa l'intera prima parte del lavoro (87-277) di cui segnalo solo gli snodi fondamentali. La malattia va intesa all'interno di un contesto culturale che vede nella combinazione di fato e provvidenza divina la chiave di lettura fondamentale per giustificare l'insorgenza e tracciarne la via per la guarigione, intesa come ripristino dell'ordine naturale e sociale (cap. II). Concentrandosi sulla salute femminile, il III cap. rende ragione dei diversi settori interessati alla salute della donna, evidenziando il carattere eminentemente sociale dell'impegno riabilitativo, in cui trova particolare evidenza il sistema dell'onore che i successi terapeutici garantiscono agli operatori professionali (riservati alle élite). Tuttavia, quali che fossero gli operatori (popolari e/o etnici) lo sforzo complessivo del sistema sanitario mirava alla protezione delle funzioni essenziali della donna, cioè la maternità e il suo controllo da parte del maschio (marito) che le irregolarità mestruali rendevano problematici. Benché l'intero bacino mediterraneo condividesse concezioni analoghe sulla corporeità femminile, il mondo giudaico ha elaborato un sistema specifico di sistematizzazione, che ha alla base le leggi levitiche di purità (cap. IV). La forza ambivalente del sangue mestruale, collegato alla sfera divina grazie alla sua connessione con la forza riproduttiva e nel contempo collegato alla morte e al disordine quando fluisce, viene controllato dalla forza normativa maschile, che essendo anche custode della santità, lascia alle donne un ruolo passivo ed esclusivamente privato.

La ricerca si presenta sin qui molto ben documentata, combinando i numerosi studi, con un massiccio ricorso alle fonti classiche, sia greco-romane che giudaiche (*Misna*). Ma questo pregio ha un marginale risvolto problematico, determinato dalla mole della materia presa in esame. Forse è ravvisabile una certa sproporzione tra la ricerca di tipo socio-culturale e i suoi riflessi sull'approccio esegetico elaborato negli "scenari di lettura" dell'ultimo capitolo. Una maggior stringatezza della I parte, avrebbe favorito la lettura senza compromettere il valore complessivo della ricerca. Sempre in questa linea si può osservare la puntigliosità, a volte un po' pletorica, dell'apparato delle note, che però è da addebitare al fatto che siamo di fronte ad una rielaborazione della tesi dottorale (con il relativo pegno da pagare al genere letterario) sostenuta dall'A. nel 2001 presso l'Università di Deusto (Bilbao).

La II parte (278-430) si apre con il cap. V di carattere "propriamente" esegetico (confronto sinottico, critica testuale, ricostruzioni redazionali). Nonostante la mole relativamente ridotta (281-327) lo studio storico-letterario si presenta ordinato e ben supportato dall'apparato bibliografico.

L'A. resta nell'alveo della ricerca ormai assodata quando riconosce l'originaria indipendenza del racconto della donna, rispetto a quello della figlia di Giairo (5, 22-24.35-43), ma prende posizione nel riconoscere in Marco l'autore dell'intercalazione. Da rilevare è l'assunto (309-310; 318-319) che vede nel racconto della donna la convergenza e la fusione, già premarciane ma da Marco consolidate, di due differenti tradizioni circa la guarigione: una connessa al tatto (vv. 25-29*) e l'altra alla parola di Gesù (vv. 30-34*). L'osservazione viene ripresa in seguito (vedi ad es. 412) evidenziando come la prima descrizione, che si incentra sulla potente volontà e razionalità della donna per ottenere la salvezza, faccia da contrappeso alla seconda ove invece prevale il potere e la parola (razionalità) di Gesù, che ridimensionano il protagonismo femminile. Rispetto al contesto culturale, la presenza del primo racconto attesta un carattere straordinario e per certi versi trasgressivo del vangelo, rispetto alla posizione della donna.

Con l'ultima osservazione siamo passati all'approdo più originale del lavoro: il cap. VI che combina finalmente il racconto marciano con il suo contesto socio-culturale. Esso merita una particolare attenzione. L'opera di contestualizzazione si realizza grazie al ricorso a 5 diversi scenari di lettura che intendono riprodurre le reazioni e la comprensione dei lettori antichi per giungere ad una più precisa identificazione del significato e della funzione della guarigione rispetto alla situazione dei lettori intesi del vangelo. Il primo scenario si concentra sugli operatori sanitari, opponendo l'agire "disonorevole" dei medici cui è ricorsa la donna, all'azione efficace di Gesù, un operatore tradizionale, la cui potenza sanante che deriva da Dio stesso, sfida la ricerca dell'onore determinando la distinzione tra chi crede in Gesù e gli accredita l'onore e chi lo rifiuta (cf. i suoi di Mc 6,1-6a). Il secondo mette a tema la comprensione culturale dell'emorragia uterina intesa, nella sua eziologia, come intrinsecamente connessa alla sfera religiosa violata (peccato e punizione). Il racconto non affronta direttamente il problema religioso della purità/impurità, ma identificando la malattia della donna come *mastix*, ne evidenzia il carattere punitivo/retributivo, riconnettendolo ad una violazione dell'Alleanza. La durata della malattia (12 anni) e la totale inutilità degli sforzi medici, concorrono nell'assimilare la donna alla ragazza *morta*, perché incapace di assumere i ruoli fondamentali di madre e sposa, cosa che la sua azione solitaria pone in netta evidenza: è una donna (vedova o divorziata) autonoma e svincolata dalla protezione maschile. Il terzo scenario mette a tema il rapporto tra malato e guaritore. Grazie all'azione autonoma e deliberata della donna (vedi la strategia di occultamento) e al successivo riconoscimento pubblico dell'onore di Gesù (cf. «tutta la verità» del v. 33), il racconto attesta una forte reciprocità tra fede e forza guaritrice e in questo si constata un netto ridimensionamento del rapporto classico tra patrono e cliente. Da qui il valore *soversivo* del racconto che elegge a modello proprio una donna malata d'emorragia, cioè segnata da instabilità, inferiorità e inaffidabilità sociali, che però la fede trasforma in paradossali occasioni di incontro. L'A. poi riprende il rapporto dinamico, interpersonale e credente che lega la malata a Gesù. Costei acquista così un forte spessore di autonomia e protagonismo, in cui la fede diventa il "potere" che rovescia i ruoli istituzionaliz-

zati e permette di accedere alla salvezza che Dio dispiega in Gesù. Alla coraggiosa iniziativa della donna segue il riconoscimento da parte di Gesù del suo posto nella nuova famiglia dei discepoli (cf. v. 34: «figlia»). Ella grazie alla guarigione (corpo fisico) viene ristabilita nello spazio sociale, ma la sua fede ne ha mostrato uno spessore che supera i rigidi confini imposti alle donne mediterranee, integrandola pienamente nello spazio pubblico e maschile (corpo sociale), in virtù della sua confessione nella forza sanante di Gesù che la integra pienamente nel gruppo di coloro che lo seguono e lo annunciano (corpo teologico).

A proposito dell'approccio strettamente esegetico, di primo acchito fa specie l'esplicita concentrazione della ricerca al solo racconto della donna malata, che mette in secondo piano la composizione intercalata delle due storie e quindi gli effetti narrativi che tale strategia mira ad ottenere. La cosa però non accade in modo inconsapevole, anzi la Estévez López precisa tale prospettiva sin dalle prime battute (vedi ad es. 26 e poi 289, n. 28; 306, n. 79), giustificandola a partire dall'approccio socio-culturale adottato. Tuttavia la separazione non le impedisce di assegnare l'intercalazione all'attività redazionale di Marco (vedi 300-307) e di ricavarne delle precise conseguenze a livello dell'interpretazione (vedi ad es. il punto 5 del VI cap. e 425 e 427). A mio avviso una maggior attenzione alla complessità del doppio racconto non sarebbe stata di troppo, specie per la enucleazione degli effetti pragmatici (lettore implicito) che le acute osservazioni esegetiche potevano suggerire.

Tutto il lavoro ha come intento quello di attingere alla comprensione culturalmente caratterizzata del lettore del I sec., ma non manca un'attenzione al lettore reale in senso stretto (la comunità di Marco) che è incentrata sulla potente esemplarità della fede della donna nei confronti della comunità storica in grave difficoltà a motivo delle persecuzioni neroniana (423-429).

Nella rivalutazione del ruolo femminile sta uno degli esiti "rivoluzionari" che la Estévez López riconosce all'esposizione marciana del racconto. Ma forse si può ravvisare complessivamente una qualche amplificazione di genere. Difatti, pur limitandoci al solo contesto immediato, l'indemoniato geraseno — senza dubbio socialmente emarginato e pagano (cf. 5,3-5) — diventa annunciatore dell'agire divino di Gesù (5,19-20) e sul versante sociale opposto l'arcisinagogo Giairo non esita a ricorrere a Gesù e a confidare in lui (5,36). La riformulazione del quadro socio-religioso propria dell'orizzonte evangelico quindi non è limitata solo alla donna, ma comprende di fatto l'intero arco sociale e culturale (cf. ad es. 9,33-37 dove il bambino, socialmente irrilevante, è eletto a modello per i Dodici).

Gli apporti interpretativi — benché restino nell'alveo della ricerca sin qui fatta, ove il valore esemplare della fede della donna è universalmente riconosciuto — gettano una luce nuova e preziosa sullo sfondo socio-culturale ove si innesta la guarigione e sulle conseguenze che tale lettura prospettica può avere nella valutazione degli "effetti" intesi da Marco nella stesura del racconto. Credo che stia qui il valore decisamente innovativo e prezioso del lavoro portato avanti con ricca e precisa documentazione e con paziente confronto e ricostruzione; esso evidenzia in tutto il suo spessore l'importanza del contesto antropologico (la situazione del lettore in-

teso) ai fini di una interpretazione che voglia evitare il rischio sia dell'etnocentrismo che dell'anacronismo, senza dimenticare quello "di genere".

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Johann HINTERMAIER, *Die Befreiungswunder in der Apostelgeschichte*. Motiv- und formkritische Aspekte sowie literarische Funktion der wunderbaren Befreiungen in Apg 5,17-21; 12,1-23; 16,11-40 (Bonner Biblische Beiträge 143) Berlin, Philo 2003. 342 p. 50 / sFr 81

Hintermaier, a pastor and school counselor in the diocese of Linz, offers here his dissertation, supervised by Jean-Noël Aletti and Johannes Beutler and accepted at the Gregorian University in Rome in December 1999. The focus of this work is on three stories in Acts which tell of Christians being miraculously delivered from prison: Acts 5,17-21; 12,1-19; and 16,16-39. His work builds on that of R. Kratz (*Rettungswunder. Motiv- traditions- und formkritische Aufarbeitung einer biblischen Gattung* [EHS.T 23; Frankfurt 1979]) and B. Prete and A. Scaglioni (*I miracoli degli apostoli nella chiesa delle origini. Studi sui racconti dei miracoli negli Atti* [Torino 1989]). It is largely a critical dialogue with Kratz who argued, based on comparative material from the Hellenistic world, that the function of such stories in Acts was to say that the new religion has surpassed the established one.

The argument unfolds in three big chapters: chapter 1, miracles of liberation from prison in antiquity; chapter 2, narrative analysis of Luke and Acts; chapter 3, analysis of each of the three miracles of liberation from prison in Acts. An introduction poses the problem; a conclusion summarizes the argument; a bibliography and two indexes conclude the volume. Chapter 1 surveys similar material in Greek literature (Euripides, *Bacchae*, which speaks of the freeing both of Dionysius' followers [443-450] and of the god himself [616-619]; Nonnos, *Dionysiaka*, which also refers to liberation from prison of both the god [45.220] and his followers [45.270-285; 46.1-5]; and Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, which contains two stories of the philosopher's escape from prison by miraculous means [7.38; 8.30]). Omitted is the Latin, Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 3.690-710, which tells of a convert of Bacchus, the Lydian Acoetes, who is imprisoned by Pentheus and sentenced to death. Before he could be killed, however, the doors flew open of their own accord and the fetters fell from his arms of their own accord. The chapter also refers to three examples of OT apocryphal literature (a 3rd century AD *Life of Abraham*; the treatment of Abraham in *LAB*; and the description of Moses in Artapanus [as reported in Eusebius, *Praep evang* IX, 27, 23-26]). While the story about Moses deals with his being set free from prison, the traditions about Abraham involve a deliverance from fire. The chapter then concludes

with possible OT comparative material (Dan 3,22-28 and 6,17-25 are actual stories of liberation by miraculous means, the first from fire, the second from the lion's den; Isa 42,6-7; 45,1-2; 61,1; Ps 107,10.13-16; 142,6-8 are not miracle stories but references to deliverance from prison). The chapter does not treat such stories in the Acts of Paul and the Acts of Thomas (142-155).

Chapter 2 offers a narrative analysis of Luke and Acts. This section assumes the narrative unity of Luke and Acts. It consists of two segments: conflict, persecution, and imprisonment in Luke and the same items in Acts. This yields two main conclusions: first, the miracles of liberation in Acts are to be read in the context of the narrative emphasis on controversy and persecution; second, the miracles of liberation in Acts are illustrations of declarations and promises made in Luke (e.g., 12,4-12; 21,5-19). The method followed is the listing *ad seriatim* of passages whose content speaks of conflicts, persecution, and imprisonment. There is no sense of the place of these passages in the plot of Luke and Acts. In fact, plot is never mentioned.

Chapter 3 consists of an analysis of the individual miracles of liberation from prison in Acts. Methodologically each analysis focuses on persons or groups, place, time, actions, and results. There is also some attention to linguistic-syntactical issues. As in the previous chapter, there is no sense of how to read a narrative in terms of the plot's narrative ebb and flow. The first miracle story, Acts 5,17-21, in its context does not have the character of a demonstration of the power of a god. It simply enables the apostles' preaching in the temple. The apostles are not representatives of a new religion. So this text is not comparable to the Bacchic traditions in Euripides and Nonnos. Moreover, the reference to an angel of the Lord leading the apostles out does not correspond to anything in hellenistic literature. This reference rather links Acts 5 to the OT. The second story, Acts 12,1-23, again has an angel as the agent of liberation pointing to OT roots. Here too Peter does not represent a new religion, as in Euripides. Rather Luke wants to show throughout his two volume work that the Christian movement is grounded in the old religion (Judaism) and in its scriptures. As in Nonnos, Acts 12 has the chains fall off of their own accord, the presence of light, and doors open by themselves. As in the freeing of Abraham, Acts 12 has the death of the prison guards. As with Aratapanus' Moses, Acts 12 has the automatic opening of doors and a demonstration of the power of God. While there are some components of the story in Acts 12 that are found in hellenistic traditions, the ethos is that of the Jewish ones. In the comments on this story of miraculous liberation in Acts 12, the author employs a typological reading. Echoes of Luke 22, Exodus 12-32, and Luke 24 introduce the themes of Peter's following Jesus, the new exodus, and resurrection typology. The third story of liberation from prison by miraculous means, Acts 16,11-40, is the only one of the three texts that functions as a real escape or rescue. The other two seem to have another function. It has more components that are found in Euripides' tale of Bacchic liberation: the devotees call on their god, the chains fall off on their own, the doors open of their own accord, the followers are free. Artapanus' Moses also has the doors open on their own accord and the focus on proclamation. Abraham's deliverance results in the conversion of his persecutors, as in Acts 16. In Daniel 6 a heathen is positive to God as a result of the miracle. There is a contrast between the story of Acts 16 and those in Acts 5 and 12. In the

former, the jail is opened so all could escape; in the latter, the angel delivers only the apostle(s). In the former, the influence shaping the story is the Greek tradition, especially Euripides and to some extent, Artapanus; in the latter, the influence is from the OT mainly. In all of the stories the conflict between the old and the new religion plays no role. In Acts the Christians' God is "the God of our fathers" and Jesus is understood as the fulfillment of OT prophecies. What is the function of these stories in Acts? All three illustrate how the various promises and prophecies in the Third Gospel are fulfilled in Acts. They are all connected to the proclamation of the gospel. Individually, Acts 5's miracle story legitimates the contents of the apostles' preaching; Acts 12's story, set against the background of Passover, echoes the Exodus deliverance and implies that the God who freed Israel from Egypt is the one who has raised Jesus and saves the prisoner, Peter; Acts 16's story functions to facilitate the mission to the Gentiles, in that the opening of the doors of the prison opens the door to the Gentile jailer.

This is an interesting topic on which to do research. The research done for this dissertation is considerable. There are two problems that relate to methodology that must be addressed. Simply put: This is a dissertation in need of a method. In the first place, there is no sense of how to read a narrative. For a tradition rooted in the historical method, dealing with historical issues and/or the interpretation of some letters is relatively easy. Dealing with narrative is another matter. Only a literary/rhetorical method can "read" narrative. In the contemporary era, narrative criticism like that exemplified in R. Alan Culpepper's *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia 1983), shaped by non-biblical literary critics like Seymour Chatman and Roman Jakobson, focuses on matters like narrator and point of view, plot, characters, and implied reader. It has the virtue of being able to enter the flow of the narrative and comment on the pieces within that flow. The form of non-biblical literary criticism that seems to fit best with what this volume is trying to do, however, is "reading with the authorial audience". The terminology is that of Peter J. Rabinowitz (*Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation* [Ithaca, NY 1987]) but the same approach can be found in Hans Robert Jauss ("Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory", *New Literary History* 2 [1970] 7-37) and Wolfgang Iser's concept of "the readers' repertoire" (*The Acts of Reading* [Baltimore 1978]). The question posed by each of these three literary critics is: how would an ancient auditor/reader have heard/understood this text? A combination of narrative criticism with that of a reading with the authorial audience makes for fruitful results. Some such method is demanded by this volume.

A second methodological issue relates to how comparative material is used in NT research. The old history of religions approach thought in terms of borrowing. The question raised by parallels was who had borrowed from whom. The result was a picture of early Christianity as a syncretistic religion made up of borrowings from here, there, and yonder. From this approach derives the current fear of hellenistic parallels because it would mean Christian borrowing from pagan sources. The method of reading with the authorial audience, however, sees the use of comparative material in a very different way. It is assumed that the early Christian movement had a coherent

religious center. The comparative material functions to construct the authorial audience that would have heard the Christian texts. In this approach there is no more fear of hellenistic parallels than of non-Christian Jewish ones because all they do is describe the "cultural repertoire" of the text's readers. In the volume under review, the assumption is that of borrowing. Also assumed is that the various motifs (e.g., doors opening on their own, fetters falling off by themselves) are borrowed components so that a listing of these components indicates the lines of dependence. By counting up the various components that the Christian stories have in common with the non-Christian ones, it is possible to determine from whom the Christians borrowed. But what if there is no borrowing at all in the sense of one text using another (like Matthew is alleged to have done with Mark)? What if the stories of miraculous deliverances from prison were part of the cultural heritage of Mediterranean peoples and were used by various cultural and religious groups but shaped in ways that reflected the teller's own social location? There would be enough similarities that would enable a reader to recognize the common script but enough differences to signal particular social locations. If so, then when Acts 5 and 12 tell their stories of miraculous deliverances, they would be told by a skillful author in ways that were appropriate to the context of the Lukan narrative. A Jewish context for Acts 5 and 12 demands that the common cultural story line be told as a Jewish person would have experienced it. A Gentile context for Acts 16 would have demanded an appropriate shaping of the narrative to fit how a non-Jew would have experienced the events. Working with assumptions like these, it would be possible to say that all three stories of miraculous deliverances in Acts function in some way to say that there is nothing that can prevent the deity and his followers from conquering the world. In the Christian context of Acts 5 and 12, it is not a new religion triumphing over an old one, to be sure, but it is a matter of religious novelty in each case; in Acts 16 the new religion does triumph over the old pagan one. In this sense, the Bacchic theme of Euripides and his heirs is Christianized while the similarities remain.

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J. ROSS WAGNER, *Heralds of the Good News*. Isaiah and Paul "In Concert" in the Letter to the Romans (NTS 101). Leiden – Boston – Köln, Brill 2002. xxii-437 p. 16 × 24,5. € 126 – \$ 170

Nel panorama degli studi paolini, e della lettera ai Romani in particolare, il volume di Wagner è da salutare con interesse. Sebbene in questi ultimi due decenni gli studi sull'uso paolino delle Scritture aumentino, essi non appagano ancora sufficientemente la necessità di comprendere tale fenomeno che, soprattutto in alcune sezioni delle sue lettere, vistosamente domina l'argomentazione di Paolo e che fino a poco tempo fa, tranne alcuni isolati studi, è stato solo superficialmente trattato.

Wagner ci offre a riguardo un ottimo ed erudito lavoro, frutto della sua tesi dottorale difesa alla Duke University nel 1999. Il volume non delude affatto quanto ad accuratezza e scientificità. Il testo è sempre ben documentato attraverso un ampio e preciso apparato di note. Utilissimi e dettagliati sono gli indici alla fine del volume, soprattutto quello riguardante le fonti antiche. Non manca una vasta e aggiornata bibliografia finale, un'appendice sulle antiche versioni di Isaia e, lungo tutto il volume, oltre 40 tra specchietti, figure e tabelle che facilitano la lettura e l'assimilazione dei dati.

Il primo capitolo (1-41) delinea gli intenti e la metodologia del lavoro oltre a fare il punto su alcune questioni previe: l'uso delle Scritture in Paolo negli studi recenti (5-13), le ipotesi di disponibilità dei testi scritturistici per l'Apostolo (19-28), i destinatari della lettera ai Romani e la loro competenza scritturistica (33-39). Gli scopi dichiarati del lavoro sembrano tre, tra loro correlati (2-3). Innanzitutto vedere come Paolo legge Isaia, in che forma testuale e secondo quali tecniche e assunti. In secondo luogo mostrare come la comprensione del Vangelo paolino illumina la sua lettura di Isaia e viceversa come gli oracoli isaiani modellano la concezione paolina del messaggio cristiano. Infine, quanto questo interscambio di scrittura, teologia e missione, arricchisce la lettura della lettera ai Romani. Come il titolo suggerisce, il tentativo è quello di percepire le due voci di Isaia e Paolo confluenti nel medesimo annuncio del vangelo. L'autore indica anche la metodologia che guida la sua ricerca. Essa consiste nell'esaminare le citazioni e allusioni a Isaia nel contesto dell'argomentazione paolina (15). Questo compito si svolge secondo vari passaggi. Il primo è la comparazione del testo paolino di ogni citazione e allusione con il testo criticamente ricostruito della LXX di Isaia e le sue lezioni varianti, ma anche con altre versioni greche più tarde, i padri della Chiesa, e le citazioni in altri passi del NT, nonché con la forma ebraica (TM e Qumran), aramaica (Targum) e siriana (Peshitta) disponibile. Tale confronto porta a distinguere per quanto possibile la *Vorlage* paolina dalle modificazioni al testo di Paolo stesso, così che emergano gli interessi retorici e argomentativi dell'appropriazione dei testi da parte dell'Apostolo (15-17). Un passo successivo è la comparazione con altre interpretazioni dello stesso testo nella letteratura del Secondo Tempio, come anche nelle varie tradizioni testuali (17-18). L'ultimo passo — l'autore qui è debitore dichiarato della nota metodologia di R.B. Hays (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven – London 1989]) — consiste nell'ascolto degli echi intertestuali, ovvero delle risonanze in Romani del più vasto contesto isaiano dei testi che Paolo utilizza nelle citazioni e allusioni, così da percepire come Paolo legge Isaia (18-19). L'autore indica anche i tre punti che si prefigge di focalizzare lungo lo studio dei testi: i testi di Isaia e i loro contesti, le strategie interpretative di Paolo nell'utilizzare questi testi e l'argomentazione paolina in cui sono inseriti, inclusi gli altri testi di cui si appropria oltre quelli di Isaia.

Il lavoro quindi prosegue su queste basi suddiviso in quattro capitoli che rispettivamente esaminano Rm 9 (9,1-29), Rm 10 (esattamente 9,30-10,21), Rm 11 (11,1-36) e Rm 15 (15,7-33). Altri due testi sono trattati sotto forma di brevi excursus: Rm 2,24 con la citazione di Is 52,5 (176-178) e Rm 14,11 che cita Is 45,23 (336-340).

L'analisi testuale delle singole citazioni e allusioni è rigorosissima, ed è sicuramente il maggior pregio del volume. Nessuna possibilità per ricostruire il percorso a ritroso del frasario utilizzato da Paolo è lasciata inavasa, che siano le varie lezioni greche dello stesso testo, o le altre versioni, come anche testi paralleli o l'utilizzo dello stesso testo nella letteratura intertestamentaria. Tale lavoro permette con una maggiore sicurezza di individuare in quali punti Paolo ha presumibilmente variato e modificato la sua *Vorlage*. I risultati a riguardo, anche se non modificano sostanzialmente il quadro già stabilito da altri eccellenti studi (in particolare D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums*. Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus [BHT 69; Tübingen 1986] e C.D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*. Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature [SNTSMS 74; Cambridge 1992]), tolgono però il dubbio che non siano state vagliate tutte le possibilità, che è il rimprovero espresso riguardo i lavori appena citati da T.H. Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* (Oxford 1997) 140-160. In alcuni punti tuttavia l'autore offre convincenti e motivate soluzioni che si distinguono dal consenso generale, come la lettura ἐὼν κληθήσονται al posto di ἐρρέθη αὐτοῖς in Rm 9,26 (84-85), oppure l'attenta disamina e critica dell'origine prepaolina dell'amalgama di Is 28,16 e Is 8,14 in Rm 9,33. Il volume è così estremamente utile per la mole di dati, sempre documentati e criticamente esaminati.

L'altro fondamentale aspetto dello studio di Wagner è quello interpretativo. A riguardo occorre fare alcuni rilievi sulla scelta stessa dei testi da analizzare (Rm 9-11 e 15). Essa è dettata dalla presenza delle citazioni e allusioni di Isaia in questi capitoli. Questo però mi sembra il punto più problematico a livello di metodologia del libro. Se il presupposto e anche lo scopo ricercato è di vedere come Paolo legge Isaia e come tale lettura modella la stessa argomentazione paolina, tale focalizzazione rischia però di falsare la comprensione della lettera, per due motivi.

Il primo è che l'Apostolo utilizza tutte le Scritture nel loro insieme e in ampie sue parti, senza distinzioni di sorta. Certamente si può parlare di una preferenza per alcuni testi isaiani o parti del libro (341-344), ma, come l'autore stesso felicemente afferma, Isaia è «among a chorus of witnesses» (351-352). L'autore, in effetti, è molto attento alla questione e non tralascia certamente di analizzare e commentare anche gli altri testi oltre Isaia o in connessione con il profeta, ma l'assunto di base non permette di avvalersi a fondo delle argomentazioni della lettera. Quando Paolo cita Isaia è perché in quel preciso punto dell'argomentazione ha bisogno di quel testo, e così fa per i Salmi o altri profeti o i testi patriarcali. Nello stesso modo, inversamente, se nei capitoli 5-8 praticamente non fa uso delle Scritture è perché la natura dell'argomentazione non lo richiede. È l'argomentazione paolina che guida la scelta dei testi scritturistici, e non un particolare interesse per un libro profetico. Questa ambiguità, certamente non voluta — e infatti nel corso delle analisi cerca di evitarla e equilibrare —, sottende il lavoro di Wagner, ma proprio per i presupposti che ne stanno alla base.

Il secondo motivo è ancora più decisivo e chiarisce il primo, ed è la scarsa attenzione al fenomeno retorico della lettera. Per comprendere co-

me Paolo legge e utilizza le Scritture occorre comprendere come si snoda la sua argomentazione perché esse sono sempre e immancabilmente al servizio di questa. I testi di cui Paolo si appropria hanno ciascuno non solo un contenuto interessante per l'argomentazione (in questo aspetto l'analisi di Wagner è scrupolosa). Essi hanno soprattutto una funzione retorica essenziale. La scelta dei testi (*inventio*), la loro collocazione nelle diverse parti del discorso (*dispositio*) e la loro fattiva presentazione (*elocutio*) determinano la funzione di queste. Qualche breve esempio. La distinzione tra citazione e allusione, che fa parte dell'*inventio*, è decisiva. Un testo citato e uno alluso non hanno la stessa funzione retorica. Wagner, in effetti, opera tale distinzione e in modo molto corretto (16, n. 57), ma non ne trae le conseguenze lungo il lavoro come si evince per esempio dal trattamento del testo di Rm 9,20 (56-71) in cui la differenza tra un testo citato e uno alluso non ha un particolare significato e funzione. Così occorre anche porre attenzione alla collocazione dei testi scritturistici (*dispositio*). Diverso è il caso di Rm 9,33 in cui la citazione è nell'esordio, e diverso è il caso di Rm 10,5-8 in cui i testi addotti sono la prova decisiva del capitolo. La sola differenza di estensione della trattazione nel volume, 31 pagine per Rm 9,33 (126-157) e solo 9 per Rm 10,5-8 (159-168) è indicativa della scelta metodologica di Wagner. L'interesse è per i testi isaiani (quindi Rm 9,33 che cita Isaia e meno Rm 10,5-8 che cita il Pentateuco), ma questa scelta rischia di distorcere i dati della lettera stessa. La citazione di Is 28,16 e Is 8,14 in Rm 9,33 è importante perché in qualche modo riassume i dati del problema da trattare nell'argomentazione del capitolo 10, ma quanto decisiva e risolutrice invece la comparazione che Paolo offre con i due testi Di Lv 18,5 e Dt 30,12-14 in Rm 10,5-8! Una simile constatazione può essere fatta per il capitolo 11, perché la prova decisiva è proprio quando Paolo non utilizza le Scritture (i versetti 11-24), è lì che offre gli elementi per arrivare alla sua straordinaria conclusione.

Un'ultima annotazione. L'autore fa spesso appello al contesto dei testi citati da Paolo, cercando le risonanze che tale contesto può provocare o suggerire per la lettura di Romani. Egli giustamente dà a tale ricerca di echi intertestuali un ruolo sussidiario di conferma dei dati che emergono dall'analisi testuale (18, n. 67). Nondimeno, visto lo spazio che occupano, bisogna chiedersi quanto e quando siano utili. Anche qui l'attenzione alla fattura retorica dell'argomentazione paolina è necessaria perché non sempre e indistintamente Paolo citando le Scritture vuole richiamare il contesto delle citazioni stesse. Così le parole citate di Is 27,9 in Rm 11,27 sono chiaramente dipendenti dalla citazione di Is 59,20-21 appena precedente di cui sono continuazione e allora ha poca rilevanza fare emergere il contesto di Is 24-27 (294-298). Ancora più chiaro è l'esempio di Lv 18,5 citato in Rm 10,5. Paolo cita le parole di Levitico perché in esse è espresso sinteticamente il principio della «giustizia per la fede», e il loro contesto in Lv 18 in ordine a questo principio ha una scarsissima importanza (160-161). Diverso è il caso di Rm 9,25 dove Paolo cita Os 2,25 (2,23 LXX). Lì il contesto del capitolo 2 di Osea è importante per capire la procedura di Paolo e Wagner lo sottolinea correttamente (86-89), anche se non condivido in tutto la sua interpretazione di una doppia applicazione (a Israele e ai Gentili) del passo.

I rilievi espressi allo studio di Wagner non ne diminuiscono il valore, piuttosto sono un invito e uno stimolo a proseguire in questa ricerca in modo più efficace. Il campo di ricerca è promettente perché può affrancare la lettura di Romani dalle pastoie di presupposti teologici che spesso la imprigionano, ma necessita di essere impostato meglio attraverso una più rigorosa e serrata analisi retorica da abbinare all'analisi testuale di rara qualità che ci offre Wagner.

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Andrew H. WAKEFIELD, *Where to Live, The Hermeneutical Significance of Paul's Citations from Scripture in Galatians 3:1-14* (SBL Academia Biblica 14). Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2003. ix-227 p. 15,5 × 23. \$39.95

Cet ouvrage, basé sur une thèse préparée sous la direction du professeur Richard B. Hays, témoigne d'une analyse détaillée du *status quaestionis* et fait montre d'une grande clarté d'argumentation. Au final, les conclusions sont prudentes mais sûres et permettent de voir sous un nouveau jour la logique de l'argumentation de Paul en Ga 3,1-14. L'auteur fait d'abord justice à la façon dont Paul utilise l'Écriture. Si l'on ne peut attendre de lui un usage 'moderne' de l'Écriture, il est peu fructueux de supposer chez lui de prétendues 'incohérences' qui, en l'espace de quelques versets, ruineraient son raisonnement (critique de H. Räisänen, 93). Après avoir fait l'état de la recherche récente sur Paul, tant dans son rapport à la Loi (chapitre 2) que dans sa technique de citation (chapitre 3), l'auteur développe longuement les développements des dernières décennies sur l'intertextualité (chapitre 4), s'appuyant notamment sur le concept d'*'ungrammaticalities'* de M. Riffaterre (chapitre 5). Ce terme désigne en quelque sorte les 'bosses' du texte, les incongruités, les questions que celui-ci génère de lui-même. Son sixième et dernier chapitre enfin lui permet de proposer sur ces bases une lecture renouvelée de Ga 3,1-14, qu'il réécrit en paraphrasant (187).

Les résultats de sa recherche apparaissent à partir du chapitre 5. Pour rendre compte de l'ordonnement des citations en Ga 3,6-14, il propose une structure en forme de chiasme (cf. 132-136) tout en rattachant curieusement 3,6 à 3,1-5 (cf. 136, note 16). Au centre se trouve le motif de la vie (vv. 11-12), en position intermédiaire, celui de la malédiction (vv. 10 et 13) et celui de la bénédiction (vv. 8-9 et 14a) et, enfin, aux extrémités (vv. 1-6 et 14b), celui de la foi. La mise en évidence de ce chiasme ne résout cependant pas la question de son interprétation. Il suppose alors que le centre et les extrémités sont déterminants: «it seems likely that a chiasm may focus particular attention on certain sets of linked pairs, namely its innermost and outermost pairs (perhaps most of all the innermost)» mais il remarque immédiatement: «Unfortunately, at this time, I have no evidence to offer in support of this

suggestion other than intuition» (138)! L'auteur ne peut se baser sur les seules citations pour rendre compte de la logique argumentative mise en œuvre. Reconnaître que les citations ne servent pas seulement de preuve mais aussi de conclusions ou d'illustrations d'une argumentation existante, «some of the citations of in Gal 3:1-14 do *not* function as proof, but rather as rhetorical extension of a point already made» (172), est exact mais ne suffit pas. Il est dommage qu'il considère l'étude de la rhétorique hellénistique et rabbinique comme secondaire et s'appuie exclusivement sur l'intertextualité littéraire (63). Pour entrer dans la logique paulinienne, il est nécessaire certes, de prendre en compte son usage des citations mais aussi de voir comment celles-ci s'insèrent dans une structure argumentative plus large. L'étude de la *dispositio* est indispensable (cf. en particulier J.-N. Aletti, «La disposition rhétorique dans les épîtres pauliniennes», *NTS* 38 [1992] 385-401).

Cependant, les conclusions de son analyse sur le rôle de la Loi rejoignent finalement celles que j'ai proposées en 2000 dans *Tarse et Jérusalem. La double culture de l'Apôtre Paul en Galates 3,6-4,7* (AnBi 152; Rome 2003), à la suite notamment des analyses du A. Vanhoye (cf., entre autres, *Lettera ai Galati* [I Libri Biblici 8; Milano 2000], 120 en particulier: «La *tôrāh* in quanto è rivelazione del progetto di Dio annuncia la propria fine come sistema legislativo»). Dans l'intention du Législateur suprême, Dieu, la Loi n'avait pas la fonction que lui attribuaient les opposants de Paul. La Loi «has no power to break out of the old age and inaugurate the new. This is not a defect of the law precisely because the law was never intended to offer such power» (194). De fait, l'auteur a raison de souligner que «Paul [...] is not calling into question its [the Law] divine origin. Instead, he is pointing to the law's placement and function within the old age» (191). La Loi n'a pas sa place dans l'économie inaugurée en Christ. Il pointe, à juste titre ce me semble, les conséquences de ceci sur l'interprétation du ζῴοισις de Ga 3,21: «If a law *could* lead to *resurrection*, then righteousness — that is to say life in the new age — would indeed be available through the law» (182). Mais la Loi n'a effectivement pas ce pouvoir et n'avait pas été donnée dans ce but.

Par ailleurs, il voit la clé de l'emploi des deux citations de Ha 2,4 et Lv 18,5 dans la présence du verbe «vivra»: «ζήσεται is the key term in the pair of citations that form the chiasmic crux and perhaps also the *crux interpretum* for the whole passage» (173). La question n'est pas que la Loi soit impraticable mais qu'elle fasse vivre dans un régime sur lequel pèse une malédiction. Vivre sous la Loi, quelle que soit sa 'justice', c'est vivre de toute façon sous la possibilité de la malédiction (180). Enfin, une recherche spécifique, menée à l'aide du TLG, lui permet de repenser une autre lecture de Ga 3,11. Selon lui, la construction δῆλον ὅτι implique quasi toujours que le δῆλον aille avec le ὅτι qui le suit et non avec celui qui le précède (Annexe du livre, 207-214). Un texte attribué à Clément de Rome (unique cependant et tardif) lui fournit une structure analogue à celle de Paul en Ga 3,12 et lui permet ainsi d'affirmer que, dans ce cas, la citation scripturaire fonctionne comme une conclusion (165). La conséquence est importante: «Rather than an argument over how one is to be justified, complete with scriptural proof, this verse moves from an *agreement* on how one is justified [as already said in Gal 2:16] to an argument about how one who is justified should live» (167).

Pour l'auteur, l'accent de Paul dans ces versets de Ga 3,1-14 est plus eschatologique que sotériologique: «At first glance it may not seem we have made any real advance [...] What we have tentatively suggested above is that Paul is *not* talking about a life vs. death choice, but rather a life vs. life choice. In other words, Paul is *not* focusing on soteriology in that passage» (144). La question n'est pas «how to gain life?» mais bien «how to carry out life?» (145.180). Néanmoins l'auteur reconnaît lui-même que la frontière est mince et qu'il s'agit plus d'un déplacement d'accent que d'un réel changement de paradigme. *In fine* son approche rejoint assez fortement celle de J.L. Martyn (cf. 96) tout en s'en distinguant par la formulation de la question. Celle-ci n'est plus d'abord «*what time is it?*», comme chez ce dernier, mais plutôt «*where do we live?*» (179.206). L'ancien éon était celui marqué par le péché, la chair et la Loi. Il s'agit de vivre dans l'orbite du nouvel éon, marqué par la liberté, l'Esprit et la grâce. Sa lecture finale, modeste, écarte de nombreux contre-sens possibles et contribue indéniablement à voir autrement la logique de Paul en Ga 3,1-14.

Il est quelque peu dommage que l'auteur ignore les travaux écrits en d'autres langues que l'anglais. Regrettable notamment est l'absence de l'article de A. Vanhoye («πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ: fede in Cristo o affidabilità di Cristo?», *Bib* 80 [1999] 1-21) sur la question de la foi du/en Christ (πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) à propos de la discussion sur Ga 2,16. Sans, il est vrai, que cette question soit centrale pour son étude, l'auteur reprend sur ce point la position de R.B. Hays (182, note 164), mais je ne suis pas certain que sa lecture renforce celle de Hays comme il le suppose. En définitive, les conclusions sont justement modestes. Il s'agit plus d'un changement d'accent que d'un renversement d'interprétation. Ce travail permet d'aborder autrement la question des références scripturaires chez Paul en ouvrant plus large le regard sur sa souplesse dans l'utilisation des citations et en profitant plus largement des recherches théoriques sur la question de l'intertextualité.

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William G. DEVER, *Who Were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From*, Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U.K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003. xi + 268 p. 16 × 24. \$55.00 – £39.95.

Lo studio famoso di Thomas Kuhn su *La struttura delle rivoluzioni scientifiche* esamina i modi e i motivi per cui un nuovo paradigma interpretativo subentra a quello precedentemente corrente, fino a diventare esso stesso “normale”, cioè generalmente accettato. Gli studi sulla storia antica d'Israele non si conformano a questo meccanismo, ne adottano uno un po' più complicato ma meglio adatto a far fronte ad una situazione di grande conservatorismo interpretativo. Quel che accade è infatti che, quando un nuovo paradigma interpretativo viene proposto (chiamiamolo A), non lo si confronta col precedente (B), ma col penultimo (C), al fine di far vedere che A e C sono entrambi viziati da estremismo, e che la verità sta nel mezzo, cioè nel paradigma B. Questo meccanismo assicura un ricambio dei paradigmi interpretativi, però con un *décalage* temporale che aiuta a riassorbire il trauma dell'innovazione. Infatti il paradigma B, che in precedenza era stato scartato come estremistico, diventa accettabile e normale quando si colloca a metà tra il vecchio paradigma e quello ultimo arrivato. I sostenitori dell'aristotelico *in medio stat virtus* sono ovviamente dei conservatori, e però il meccanismo assicura al sistema — nonostante loro — un effettivo anche se più lento ricambio metodologico.

Tutti ricordiamo come il conservatore J. Bright (*Early Israel in Recent History Writing*, London 1956) considerasse la posizione di W.F. Albright come un equilibrato punto di mediazione tra il paradigma tradizionalistico (Y. Kaufmann) e le proposte (allora) innovative di A. Alt e M. Noth. Successivamente M. Weippert (*Die Landnahme der Israelitischen Stämme in der neueren wissenschaftlichen Diskussion*, Göttingen 1967) presentò la posizione di Alt e Noth, ormai diventata paradigma “normale”, come un punto di mediazione tra la soluzione “archeologica” (tradizionalista) di Albright e la soluzione “sociologica” (innovativa) di G. Mendenhall. Con un significativo attardamento cronologico, R. de Vaux (*Histoire ancienne d'Israël*, I-II, Paris 1971-73) presenterà la propria posizione come media tra quelle di Albright e di Alt-Noth.

Oggi che è emersa la posizione innovativa di quegli studiosi che l'autore del libro qui recensito chiama nihilisti (cf. 137: “They often call themselves revisionists; others describe them as minimalists. I have suggested that they are more accurately nihilists”), il meccanismo ora illustrato richiede di contrapporre a quest'ultimo paradigma estremo il terzultimo e tuttora normale (cioè quello di Alt-Noth), per optare infine per il penultimo, finalmente diventato un “giusto mezzo” ma finora ritenuto dai tradizionalisti troppo innovativo, dunque il paradigma “sociologico” (di G. Men-

denhall, di N. Gottwald, e del primo N.P. Lemche). E' questa infatti in buona sostanza la posizione del conservatore (di matrice albrightiana) William Dever (cf. riassuntivamente 225-226).

Con un'importante correzione, però: poiché il paradigma "sociologico" era intriso di preconcetti marxisti, esso viene rifiutato nei suoi aspetti più strettamente socio-politici, ma viene accettato nella considerazione fondamentale che l'origine di Israele va cercata non in fatti migratori dall'esterno (violenti o di pacifica infiltrazione) ma in un'evoluzione interna della stessa popolazione palestinese (cf. specialmente 74). Ad un lettore spassionato le posizioni dei cosiddetti "sociologi" e di Dever appaiono abbastanza ben coordinabili, e non giustificano (da un punto di vista scientifico) la malcelata acredine che appare a più riprese. Il titolo del capitolo 10, *Early Israel as a Frontier Agrarian Reform Movement* (167) dimostra oltre ogni dubbio quanto Dever debba al filone sociologico.

Bisogna poi dire che la base fattuale per la posizione di Dever è costituita dalle risultanze della ricerca archeologica: in parte dai suoi stessi scavi e per parte anche maggiore dalle estensive ricognizioni di superficie eseguite dagli archeologi israeliani, e sintetizzate soprattutto da I. Finkelstein (cf. specialmente 91-128). Ad un lettore spassionato le posizioni di Finkelstein e di Dever appaiono piuttosto consonanti, mentre la polemica di Dever contro Finkelstein è sempre aperta ed anche abbastanza ingenerosa. Il fatto è che il libro qui recensito intende rivolgersi ad un pubblico esterno a quello degli studiosi (basti il titolo a mostrarne il carattere divulgativo), e deve dunque presentarsi come innovativo, originale, critico e intelligente per far breccia nel pubblico. Per far ciò ha bisogno di un "avversario" personalizzato, con cui dialetticamente confliggere. In questo caso gli avversari nihilisti (i vari Davies e Thompson e Whitelam etc.) rimangono piuttosto opachi e fuori scena, si direbbe per non dover dar loro troppa visibilità, ma anche per non dover affrontare questioni letterarie aliene alla competenza dell'autore; mentre il dibattito con Finkelstein è molto più sviluppato e tutto svolto sul comune campo archeologico (cf. specialmente l'esposizione sintetica, 153-155).

Nel concreto, il contendere tra Dever e Finkelstein (che notoriamente ha ormai una lunga storia) può sintetizzarsi sul punto essenziale: se e in qual misura i cosiddetti "proto-Israeliti" (gli abitanti dei villaggi della prima età del ferro nell'interno della Cisgiordania) siano un elemento nuovo e di origine pastorale (Finkelstein) o siano discendenti dai Cananei e di origine agricola (Dever). Una simile contrapposizione delle due posizioni mi sembra piuttosto astratta, e una più attenta lettura delle posizioni dei "sociologi" potrebbe mostrare come già da parecchi decenni si pensa ad un processo in cui entrambi i fattori abbiano un loro peso, e che questo peso (non facile da quantificare) può essere stato diverso sul piano demografico e su quello ideologico. A volte, si sa, piccole élites ben motivate riescono a portarsi appresso numeri maggiori di gente amorfa (che però rimane determinante nella cosiddetta "cultura materiale"). In ogni caso il processo di colonizzazione delle nuove terre d'altura, avvenuto nella prima età del ferro, deve aver necessariamente comportato nuovi aggiustamenti nei rapporti tra pastori e agricoltori, se non altro per un mutamento nell'uso del territorio, ma anche nell'introduzione di nuove strutture ge-

stionali e di nuove ideologie socio-politiche. Capisco che un dibattito semplificato su due ipotesi contrapposte abbia il pregio della chiarezza, ed abbia anche un'efficacia euristica nel costringere i contendenti a massimizzare i rispettivi argomenti; però non credo che la "soluzione" possa consistere nel rendere semplice un quadro storico complesso.

Non trascurerei in particolare il ruolo dei rifugiati (specialmente debitori insolventi, sloggiati dalle loro terre) e della loro confluenza come *habiru* nei gruppi pastorali, per conferire al quadro una configurazione molto ben inserita nella crisi finale dell'età del bronzo. Le lettere di el-Amarna vengono abbondantemente citate, peraltro di seconda mano (dal vecchio ANET) e con vari stereotipi (Amenophi IV troppo occupato per intervenire, 170) ormai dimostrati inesatti, ed equivoci come la menzione di Hebron (172, 181, 212) o la menzione di "capi *habiru*" (171, 185) che non hanno riscontro testuale. Il ruolo dei fuggiaschi (o rifugiati che dir si voglia) caratterizza soprattutto la fase finale del Tardo Bronzo nel Levante. Ma anche se si preferisce trasferire il quadro di riferimento ad un'epoca più bassa, più vicina alla composizione dei libri biblici, non mancano esempi in cui nomadi e rifugiati (*munabtū*) vengono accomunati, certamente nel contesto di una loro caratterizzazione denigratoria, che però prende origine da effettivi processi di fusione e solidarietà (o complicità che dir si voglia). Si pensi ad esempio al passo di Sargon II: "Aramei e Sutei, abitanti in tende, rifugiati, imbrogliatori, briganti" si stanziavano nel deserto (Iraq 16, 192: vii 59 = CAD S, 183); o Sennacherib: "l'Arameo, lo sbandato, il rifugiato, l'assassino, il ladro" si rifugiano nelle paludi (OIP II 42: v 22-23).

Nella valutazione degli studiosi meno recenti (e non più vivi, e in grado di replicare) occorrerebbe poi una maggiore capacità di contestualizzazione storica. Si pensi al caso di Albrecht Alt, qui presentato come il sostenitore di un'origine nomadica (e dunque beduina) dei gruppi proto-israelitici. Al contrario gli elementi innovativi della teoria di Alt furono innanzi tutto proprio quello di aver negato il fatto migratorio nella sua formulazione grossolana (ma allora prevalente), di averlo sostituito con l'infiltrazione per piccoli gruppi, e poi soprattutto di aver introdotto il criterio della *Territorialgeschichte* e il confronto "sociologico" coi *Habiru* che daranno frutti evidenti nei successivi paradigmi (sia quello archeologico finkelsteiniano, sia quello sociologico). Si noti che il concetto di "infiltrazione" è difendibile sia che si tratti di movimenti topograficamente rilevanti, sia che si tratti di movimenti locali (in qualche modo più sociali che spaziali): tutto il filone di ricerca sui modi di interazione tra nomadi e sedentari tiene conto di questi spostamenti al tempo stesso orizzontali e verticali. Ovviamente le tribù della steppa non sono omologabili con i gruppi nomadici delle montagne (cf. gli "Shasu di montagna", 28), e questa differenza ben presente senza dubbio sia ad Alt come a Dever è però da quest'ultimo sottovalutata o almeno sottovalutata per poter dare del paradigma di Alt un giudizio che mi pare troppo drastico.

Anche le "rivolte contadine" del paradigma sociologico mi paiono in parte fraintese. I passi scelti non sono certamente i più pertinenti. Rifacendomi a miei lavori assai vecchi ("Implicazioni sociali nella politica di Abdi-Ashirta di Amurru", *RSO* 40 [1965] 267-277; "Il fuoruscitismo in Si-

ria nella tarda età del bronzo", *RSI* 77 [1965] 315-336) e ormai dimenticati (anche se del primo uscì anche una traduzione inglese nel 1976), ma che ebbero una qualche influenza nella formulazione del paradigma sociologico, vorrei qui citare ancora una volta il caso di EA 74, in cui il capo gentilizio Abdi-Ashirta espone un programma davvero esplicito e rivoluzionario, con eliminazione fisica dei dirigenti cittadini, liberazione dall'Egitto, recupero dei fuorusciti, pacificazione interna. La pertinenza di questo documento (e altri simili) è di tipo ambientale e analogico: indica come già nella prima metà del XIV secolo (dunque ben prima della formazione dei gruppi proto-israelitici) fossero presenti nel Levante fermenti sociali del tutto analoghi a quelli assegnabili ai proto-Israeliti. Il termine "riforma agraria" (188-189) è peraltro fuori luogo: l'alienabilità e la redistribuzione delle terre sono fondamenti antichissimi della gestione dei mezzi di produzione da parte dei gruppi gentilizi, attestati sin dal terzo millennio, oggetto di cura regia specie durante il medio bronzo, ed entrati in crisi durante il tardo bronzo. Semmai, dunque, c'è una polemica della nuova ideologia contro le abitudini anti-solidaristiche dei re "cananei".

Quanto ai popoli pre-israelitici (182, 219-220), questo è un argomento nel quale si manifesta la debolezza di Dever nel trattare questioni a base testuale - in evidente contrasto con la sua competenza indubbia nel trattare questioni a base archeologica. I cosiddetti popoli pre-israelitici, a più riprese citati nei libri di Giosuè e Giudici come annientati dall'intervento di Israele, non sono mai esistiti. Sono entità postulate e inventate, e spesso sappiamo come furono inventate (si pensi a Amorrei e Hittiti, nel senso dello studio pionieristico di J. van Seters, "The Terms 'Amorite' and 'Hittite' in the Old Testament", *VT* 22 [1972] 64-81) in funzione del tutto analoga a quella delle eziologie sulle città in rovina: cioè per dimostrare dalla loro scomparsa l'efficacia dell'intervento di Israele. Per contrasto si pensi ai popoli veri (Filistei e Fenici, Moabiti e Ammoniti, ecc.) dei quali si dovette riconoscere che non furono affatto eliminati. La questione è complessa, ma va impostata in maniera del tutto diversa da quella sconcertantemente ingenua e tradizionalista adottata da Dever. Più in generale, sul concetto di "etnicità", si potrebbero aggiungere indicazioni bibliografiche più recenti e pertinenti ad Israele (in particolare K.L. Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*, Winona Lake 1998; S. Grosby, *Biblical Ideas of Nationality*, Winona Lake 2002).

Ad analoghe considerazioni si presta la questione dell'Esodo come liberazione, di cui la versione biblica di tipo migratorio non è che la versione finale. All'epoca dei profeti dell'VIII-VII secolo, al tempo della pressione assira, il concetto di fuoruscita dalla sudditanza egiziana venne messo in evidenza per ammonire contro i rischi di una ricaduta nella sudditanza assira, ma senza alcuna implicazione migratoria. Questa divenne attuale al tempo dell'esilio babilonese, quando con tutta evidenza il progetto di un "nuovo esodo" (da Babilonia) aveva bisogno di fondarsi miticamente su un "primo esodo" (dall'Egitto), sia per mobilitare in senso ideologico i parenti sia per giustificare l'appropriazione di terre che si andava ad effettuare. Anche in questo caso, la questione è complessa ma certo non può essere affrontata semplicisticamente parafrasando il testo biblico. La mancanza di ogni accenno alla connessione tra la teoria dell'esodo e il "ritor-

no" dei deportati da Babilonia a Gerusalemme è piuttosto indicativa di una linea di difesa molto alta, a salvaguardia del racconto biblico così com'è, contro ogni sua contestualizzazione storica. Si noti che, mentre il concetto di esodo come metafora della liberazione (232) è perfettamente in linea con la teoria sostenuta in tutto il libro, invece la difesa della storicità dell'esodo come migrazione rappresenta una palese e grave contraddizione - una contraddizione unicamente spiegabile dalla contrarietà ad adottare posizioni critiche essenziali (non di dettaglio) verso il racconto biblico.

La conclusione sembra scontata: il libro di Dever presenta ottime parti nella presentazione dei risultati delle più recenti indagini archeologiche, mentre resta arroccato su letture tradizionali del racconto biblico. Questa incongruenza è significativa: un'archeologia metodologicamente affinata deve andare di pari passo con una filologia e una storiografia altrettanto affinate - tutte appartenenti ad una stessa temperie culturale. Lo sfasamento avvertibile nel libro di Dever ha radici personali abbastanza specifiche (competenza archeologica, tradizionalismo teologico), ma ha anche un significato più profondo. Una buona storia deve essere basata su un'impostazione avanzata di metodo storico, ma anche su un'utilizzazione altrettanto avanzata di tutti i tipi di materiali documentari che si ritengano pertinenti. Se il trattamento metodologicamente avanzato dei dati archeologici viene utilizzato per sostenere una lettura ingenua e letterale del testo biblico, si ricade in buona sostanza nell'equivoco di fine '800, quando le prime scoperte archeologiche, nella loro indubitabile materialità e dunque "realtà" vera, venivano addotte a confutare le immateriali e dunque opinabili fantasie e costrutti dei critici letterari. Certi passi e titoli di Dever, ad esempio *Facts on Ground. The Excavated Evidence for the Archaeological Rediscovery of the Real Israel* (75) echeggiano involontariamente certi titoli del Sayce, ad esempio *The "Higher Criticism" and the Verdict of the Monuments* (London 1893). Ora, se si pensa a quali "fatti concreti" (diversi da quelli valorizzati adesso) validassero allora quali letture bibliche (diverse da quelle difese adesso), si comprenderà come questo atteggiamento sia debole. In effetti il dato archeologico non è più concreto o più reale del testo scritto, e la valutazione dell'uno non è meno problematica dell'interpretazione dell'altro.

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NUNTII PERSONARUM ET RERUM

Mose, das leuchtende Angesicht der Tora⁽¹⁾

“Durch drei einsame Septemberwochen bin ich 1913 alltäglich in der Kirche vor der Statue gestanden, habe sie studiert, gemessen, gezeichnet, bis mir jenes Verständnis aufging, das ich in dem Aufsatz doch nur anonym auszudrücken wagte”⁽²⁾.

Es ist weder ein Künstler oder Kunstgeschichtler, noch ein Theologe oder frommer Pilger, der sich derart intensiv mit der berühmten Mose-Statue des Michelangelo in der Kirche San Pietro in Vincoli in Rom auseinandergesetzt hat, dass er in dem erwähnten Aufsatz sogar schreiben kann, er habe immer wieder versucht, “dem verächtlich-zürnenden Blick des Heros standzuhalten”⁽³⁾.

Die 1914 anonym erschienene Studie “Der Mose des Michelangelo” stammt aus der Feder von Sigmund Freud, den die Gestalt des Mose durch sein Leben hindurch nicht mehr loslassen sollte — wenige Monate vor seinem Tod erschien 1939 sein bekanntestes Werk zu Mose: “Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion”.

1. Welchen Mose stellte Michelangelo dar?

Doch bleiben wir bei der unbekannteren kunstgeschichtlichen Studie zur Mose-Figur in Rom. “Ich schicke voraus, daß ich kein Kunstkennner bin, sondern Laie”⁽⁴⁾. Mit diesen Worten eröffnet S. Freud seinen Artikel, in dem er sich dann aber höchst fachkundig mit den verschiedenen kunstgeschichtlichen Deutungen der Skulptur auseinandersetzt. Dabei wägt er klug zwischen verschiedenen Deutungsversuchen ab. Die einen sehen hier eine bestimmte Szene aus dem Leben des Mose dargestellt, näherhin die Situation des Mose, unmittelbar bevor er das Goldene Kalb wahrnimmt und die Tafeln des Bundes zerbricht. Andere wollen in der Mose-Skulptur eine Charakterdarstellung erkennen, die nicht auf eine bestimmte Situation aus der Bibel Bezug nimmt. Freud selbst wählt durch feinsinnige Beobachtungen der rechten Hand und den Verwirbelungen des Bartes sowie der Haltung der Tafeln einen eigenen Weg der Interpretation. Freud sieht Mose hier *nach* der heftigen Erregung, die die Wahrnehmung der Sünde des Volkes mit dem

⁽¹⁾ Der vorliegende Text stellt die überarbeitete Fassung der öffentlichen Vorlesung vom 15. März 2005 “Moses – How a man became a book” der Gastprofessur des “Joseph Gregory McCarthy Professorship (2005)” am Pontificio Istituto Biblico in Rom dar.

⁽²⁾ S. FREUD in einem Brief an Edoardo Weiss vom 12.4.1933, vgl. die “editorische Vorbemerkung” in S. FREUD, “*Der Moses des Michelangelo* (1914)”, DERS., *Studienausgabe X. Bildende Kunst und Literatur* (ed. A. MITCHERLICH – A. RICHARD – J. STRACHEY) (Frankfurt 1969) 196.

⁽³⁾ FREUD, *Moses*, 199.

⁽⁴⁾ FREUD, *Moses*, 197.

Goldenen Kalb ausgelöst hatte, und er schließt daraus auf eine Besonderheit des hier Dargestellten. Er glaubt zu erkennen, dass Michelangelo seinen Mose die Tafeln nicht zerbrechen lassen will.

Er wollte in einem Anfall von Zorn aufspringend Rache nehmen ..., aber er hat die Versuchung überwunden, er wird jetzt so sitzen bleiben in gebändigter Wut ... er wird auch die Tafeln nicht wegwerfen, dass sie am Stein zerschellen, denn gerade ihretwegen hat er seinen Zorn bezwungen, zu ihrer Rettung seine Leidenschaft bezwungen ... In dieser Stellung bleibt er verharrend, und so hat ihn Michelangelo als Wächter des Grabmals dargestellt⁽⁵⁾.

Er fasst seine Deutung dann wie folgt zusammen:

Aber Michelangelo hat an das Grabmal des Papstes einen anderen Moses gesetzt, welcher dem historischen oder traditionellen Mose überlegen ist. Er hat das Motiv der zerbrochenen Gesetzestafeln umgearbeitet, er lässt sie nicht durch den Zorn Moses zerbrechen, sondern diesen Zorn durch die Drohung, dass sie zerbrechen könnten, beschwichtigen oder wenigstens auf dem Weg zur Handlung hemmen. Damit hat er etwas Neues, Übermenschliches in die Figur des Moses gelegt, und die gewaltige Körpermasse und kraftstrotzende Muskulatur der Gestalt wird nur zum leiblichen Ausdrucksmittel für die höchste psychische Leistung, die einem Menschen möglich ist, für das Niederringen der eigenen Leidenschaft zugunsten und im Auftrage einer Bestimmung, der man sich geweiht hat⁽⁶⁾.

Die Beobachtungen von Freud zur Statue des Michelangelo verdienen auch unabhängig von seiner Deutung beachtet zu werden, was auch die neueste, umfassendste kunstgeschichtliche Studie zu Michelangelos Mose bestätigt, die Freuds Deutung eingehend würdigt:

Seit Sigmund Freud im 'Niederringen der eigenen Leidenschaft zugunsten und im Auftrage einer Bestimmung, der man sich geweiht hat', den Schlüssel zur Interpretation von Michelangelos *Moses* erkannt zu haben glaubte, verblasste die bis dahin gültige Meinung, die Jacob Burkhardt zusammen gefasst hatte: 'Moses erscheint in dem Moment dargestellt, da er die Verehrung des Goldenen Kalbes erblickt und aufspringen will. Es lebt in seiner Gestalt die Vorbereitung zu einer gewaltigen Bewegung, wie man sie von der physischen Macht, mit der er ausgestattet ist, nur mit Zittern erwarten mag'⁽⁷⁾.

Nicht nur die breite kunstgeschichtliche Ein- und Zuordnung, sondern vor allem die Berücksichtigung der Bibelauslegung in der Renaissance bringen F.-J. Verspoel zu einer neuen Deutung und einem tieferen Verständnis der Skulptur. Dabei berücksichtigt er mehrere Besonderheiten, die deutlich machen, dass der Mose des Michelangelo nicht in der Szene

⁽⁵⁾ FREUD, *Moses*, 214.

⁽⁶⁾ FREUD, *Moses*, 217.

⁽⁷⁾ F.-J. VERSPOEL, *Michelangelo Buonarroti und Papst Julius II. Moses – Heerführer, Gesetzgeber, Musenlenker* (Göttingen – Bern 2004) 24.

dargestellt ist, die in Zusammenhang mit der Erzählung vom Goldenen Kalb (Ex 32) steht. Er weist demgegenüber präzise auf die Szene der Bundeserneuerung (Ex 34) hin, wo Mose mit erneuerten Tafeln, nachdem er die ersten zerbrochen hatte, vom Berg herab kommt, was sich zum einen am Motiv der “Hörner” ⁽⁸⁾ des Mose zeige, und zum anderen an der “Decke” zu erkennen sei, die der Mose des Michelangelo über sein rechtes Bein gelegt habe⁽⁹⁾, mit der er nach Ex 34 sein Angesicht verhülle.

2. Der Abschluss der Bundeserneuerung

Bei dieser Szene der Rückkehr des Mose nach der Bundeserneuerung in Ex 34 setzen meine Überlegungen ein, die — ausgehend vom Mose des Michelangelo — den Mose der Bibel und die mit ihm verbundene Offenbarung Gottes in der Tora ein wenig besser zu verstehen suchen. In einem ersten Schritt soll dazu die entsprechende Textstelle von Ex 34,29-35 analysiert und interpretiert werden. Eine möglichst wörtliche Arbeit-übersetzung, die die Besonderheiten und Schwierigkeiten des hebräischen Textes erkennen lässt, ist vorangestellt:

Es war, als Mose vom Berg Sinai herabstieg, und zwar waren die zwei Tafeln des Zeugnisses in der Hand des Mose, bei seinem Abstieg vom Berg, da wusste Mose nicht, dass die Haut seines Angesichtes durch sein Sprechen mit ihm strahlte. Da sah Aaron und alle Israeliten Mose, und siehe, die Haut seines Angesichtes strahlte. Da fürchteten sie sich, sich ihm zu nähern. Da rief Mose sie (zu ihnen), und darauf kehrten Aaron und alle Fürsten in der Gemeinde zu ihm zurück. Da sprach Mose zu ihnen. Danach näherten sich alle Israeliten, und er befahl ihnen alles, was JHWH mit ihm gesprochen hatte auf dem Berg Sinai. Dann hörte Mose auf mit ihnen zu sprechen. Dann legte er eine Decke auf sein Angesicht. Wenn Mose aber vor JHWH kommen wird, um mit ihm zu sprechen, wird er die Decke bis er herausgehen wird, ablegen. Er wird herausgehen und den Israeliten sagen, was ihm befohlen worden ist. Und die Israeliten werden das Angesicht des Mose sehen, wie die Haut des Angesichtes des Mose strahlt. Mose wird die Decke wieder über sein Angesicht legen, bis er kommen wird, um mit ihm zu sprechen (Ex 34,29-35).

Von seinem Beginn her ist der vorliegende Abschnitt als Teil der Erzählung von Ex 34 ausgewiesen, denn der Hinweis auf den Abstieg des Mose vom Berg Sinai korrespondiert zum Aufstiegsbefehl von Ex 34,2. Zudem sind Aufstiegs- und Abstiegsnotiz ganz eng mit dem Motiv der Tafeln

⁽⁸⁾ Die Vulgata übersetzt “*cornuta esset facies sua*” — anstelle des “strahlenden Angesichts” (“*facies coronata*”) —, und hat so die Grundlage für das in der Ikonographie bekannte Motiv des “gehörnten” Mose geboten, gleichwohl ist zu bedenken, dass der hebräische Wortstamm שָׁרַף beide Möglichkeiten enthält, da das Verb auf das Nomen in der Bedeutung “Horn, Strahl” zurückgeht, vgl. HALAT, 1067; vgl. zu den philologischen Besonderheiten auch K. JAROŠ, “Des Mose ‘strahlende Haut’”. Eine Notiz zu Ex 34,29. 30.35”, ZAW 88 (1976) 275-281.

⁽⁹⁾ Darauf weist nachdrücklich VERSPOHL, *Michelangelo*, 42-56 hin, wenn auch mit einem kleinen Missverständnis beim zugrunde liegenden Bibeltext (s.u. Anm.22).

verbunden. Hatte Gott in Ex 34,1 dem Mose befohlen, sich zwei steinerne Tafeln zurechtzuhauen, so wie die ersten waren, die er zerbrochen hatte, weil er, Gott, auf diese Tafeln die Worte schreiben wolle, die auf den ersten standen, so hält V. 29 fest, dass Mose bei seiner Rückkehr vom Berg die beiden Tafeln in Händen hält. Aus der Verbindung von V. 1 und V. 29 ergibt sich auch, dass die Uneindeutigkeit beim Verb von V. 28⁽¹⁰⁾ dahin gehend aufzulösen ist, dass JHWH Subjekt des Schreibens ist, weil eben das Schreiben — nicht die Übergabe — wie bei den ersten Tafeln (vgl. Ex 24,12 und Ex 31,18) — in V. 1 angekündigt worden ist. Die Übergabe der von Gott beschriebenen Tafeln an Mose wird folglich zwischen V. 28 und V. 29 stillschweigend vorausgesetzt. Dieser äußerliche Rahmen bedeutet für das Verständnis des vorliegenden Abschnitts, dass in ihm die gesamte Szene der Bundeserneuerung ihren Abschluss findet. Tiefer ausgedeutet wird dies darin, dass eine Parallelität zwischen dem Ereignis auf dem Berg und nach der Rückkehr des Mose aufgebaut wird. Der Gottesbegegnung des Mose auf dem Berg (vgl. Ex 34,5-7) vergleichbar erscheint nun Mose dem Volk. Hatte Mose auf dem Berg im Gespräch mit Gott noch darum gebeten, dessen Herrlichkeit sehen zu dürfen (vgl. Ex 33,18), so strahlt die Herrlichkeit Gottes nun von seinem Angesicht zurück, so dass die Israeliten im Strahlen der Haut des Angesichtes des Mose Gottes Nähe sozusagen “sehen” können. Dass dieses Strahlen oder Leuchten der Gesichtshaut des Mose als Widerschein der Gottesbegegnung verstanden werden will, ist daran abzulesen, dass es von Mose selbst nicht bemerkt wird. Es erscheint wie eine Veränderung seiner selbst durch die Gottesbegegnung, die aber nicht für ihn, sondern für Israel geschehen ist. In ihr zeigt sich vielmehr der Auftrag des Mose für Israel. Benno Jacob spricht in seiner Auslegung gar von einem Wunder, das nach der göttlichen Ankündigung von Ex 34,10: “Da sagte er: ‘Siehe ich bin dabei einen Bund zu schließen. Vor deinem ganzen Volk werde ich Wunderwerke tun, wie sie nicht erschaffen worden sind auf der ganzen Erde und unter allen Völkern und sehen wird das ganze Volk, in dessen Mitte du bist, das Werk JHWHs. Ja, Furcht gebietend ist das, was ich mit dir mache’”, die Bundeserneuerung und die damit gewährte Vergebung charakterisiert. “Sie sollen die Herrlichkeit Gottes, und zwar auf *Moses* Angesicht sehen”⁽¹¹⁾. Von diesem “Sehen” des Volkes her besteht eine doppelte Einbindung in den narrativen Kontext. Zum einen ergibt sich ein deutlicher Bezug zur Geschichte vom Goldenen Kalb (Ex 32), weil der hebräische Ausdruck קרן “strahlen” als Nomen (*qaeraen*) neben dem “Strahl” auch das “Horn” bezeichnen kann, so dass eine assoziative Verbindung zwischen der Geschichte vom Goldenen Kalb und dem Abschluss von Ex 34 besteht, worauf in jüdischen Auslegungen immer wieder hingewiesen worden ist⁽¹²⁾.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Im Anschluss an V. 28a geht man davon aus, dass auch in V. 28b Mose Subjekt sei, so dass mit V. 28b der Befehl Gottes zum Aufschreiben von V. 27 erfüllt würde. Da aber nirgends davon die Rede ist, dass Mose auf die Tafeln schreibt, gilt es V. 28b von der Ankündigung in V. 1 her zu verstehen, so dass es sich hier um die Erfüllung der Ankündigung Gottes, auf die Tafeln schreiben zu wollen, handelt. Die Ausführung des Verschriftungsbefehls von V. 27 wird demnach nicht eigens mitgeteilt. Vgl. zum Problem C. DOHMEN, *Exodus 19–40* (HThKAT, Freiburg 2004) 373.

⁽¹¹⁾ B. JACOB, *Das Buch Exodus* (Stuttgart 1997) 990.

⁽¹²⁾ Vgl. JAROŠ, *Mose*, 274–277.

Nahum Sarna deutet es als einen subtilen Hinweis, dass der wahre Mittler zwischen Gott und Israel nicht im selbst gemachten, leblosen Bild des gehörnten Tieres bestehen kann, sondern im lebendigen Mose⁽¹³⁾.

Zum anderen gibt das strahlende Angesicht des Mose das wieder, was zwischen Gott und Mose geschehen ist, d.h. die von Mose dem Volk zu vermittelnde Botschaft, das Wort Gottes. Unter dem Eindruck der sichtbaren Gottesnähe im Offenbarungsmittler verkündet Mose dem Volk, was er selbst von Gott aufgetragen bekommen hat. Die dazu verwendete Formulierung in V. 32b bleibt auf den ersten Blick eigentümlich offen, weil der Bezugstext für das "alles, was JHWH ihm auf dem Berg Sinai gesagt hat" nicht eindeutig zu benennen ist. Dass nicht pauschal an alle Gottesreden der Sinai-Perikope zu denken ist, ergibt sich schon daraus, dass einzelne Teile daraus, wie z.B. die große Gottesrede von Ex 20,22–23,33, von Mose dem Volk bereits verkündet worden sind (vgl. Ex 24,3.7) und andere, wie z.B. der Dekalogtext von Ex 20, nicht in die Redesituation auf dem Berg Sinai zwischen Gott und Mose gehören⁽¹⁴⁾. Wenn folglich die erste Rede Gottes zu Mose in Ex 19 dem Volk bereits übermittelt worden ist (vgl. Ex 19,25), die zweite in Ex 20,2–17 nicht der Redesituation Gott-Mose auf dem Berg Sinai entspricht und die große Rede von Ex 20,22–23,33 von Mose dem Volk verkündet und als Bundesurkunde sogar verschriftet worden ist, dann kommt als Bezugstext für Ex 34,32b die große Gottesrede auf dem Berg Sinai in den Blick, die die Anweisungen zum Heiligtumsbau beinhaltet (Ex 25–31). Liest man allerdings in Ex 35–40 weiter, wo die Ausführung zur Anordnung von Ex 25–31 berichtet wird, so wirft Ex 35,1 ("Dann versammelte Mose die ganze Gemeinde der Israeliten und sagte zu ihnen: Dies sind die Worte /Dinge, die JHWH befohlen hat zu tun") die Frage auf, ob das Befehlen dessen, was Gott auf dem Berg gesagt hat von Ex 34,32, auf die Rede von Ex 25–31 zu beziehen ist, weil hier in Ex 35,1 Mose dem Volk doch eigens mitteilt, was Gott zu tun befohlen hat (vgl. Ex 35,4), was nach Ex 34,32 überflüssig wäre, da all das, wenn man V. 32 auf Ex 25–31 bezieht, dem Volk bereits übermittelt wäre. So bleibt als Bezugstext für V. 32 sinnvoller Weise der nächste Kontext, nämlich die Gottesrede von VV. 10–26.

Sie, die unmittelbar vorausgehende Gottesrede der VV. 10–26, bekommt durch diesen Hinweis auf die Verkündigung durch Mose einen tieferen Sinn, weil das kleine Gesetzesstück, das im Zentrum der Bundeserneuerung steht und das sich als Rekapitulation des "Bundestextes" von Ex 24 darstellt, den Bundesschluss vom Sinai zu einem Abschluss bringt. Das "Bundesbuch" von Ex 24,7 stellt nämlich die verschriftete Gottesrede von Ex 20,22–23,33 dar, wobei Mose dort nur den Auftrag zur Verkündigung dieser Rede erhalten hatte (vgl. Ex 20,22), während die Verschriftung sich aus dem Ziel, Bundesurkunde zu sein, ergibt. Hier in Ex 34 erhält Mose von Gott korrespondierend dazu nur den Auftrag zum Aufschreiben der Worte (V. 27),

⁽¹³⁾ Vgl. N. SARNA, *Exodus* (Philadelphia – New York – Jerusalem 1991) 221.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Vgl. zur Situation der Dekalogmitteilung C. DOHMEN, "Es gilt das gesprochene Wort". Zur normativen Logik der Verschriftung des Dekalogs", *Die zehn Worte. Der Dekalog als Testfall der Pentateuchkritik* (ed. C. FREVEL – M. KONKEL – J. SCHNOCKS) (QD 212; Freiburg 2005) 43–56, bes. 45–47.

weil sie Grundlage des Bundes sind, den Gott hier schließt, bzw. erneuert⁽¹⁵⁾. Der Auftrag zur Verschriftung (V. 27), dessen Ausführung nicht eigens berichtet wird, impliziert irgendeine Form von Übermittlung an das Volk, wie es dann von Ex 34,32b eingeholt wird. Bestätigt wird es auch dadurch, dass in Ex 34 kein neuer oder anderer Bund gegenüber Ex 24 geschlossen wird, sondern Gott dabei ist, nach der Sünde mit dem Goldenen Kalb, den Bund zu schließen, d.h. zu erneuern. Das wird durch die präsentischen Aussagen zu Beginn (V. 10) und am Ende (V. 27) im Bezug auf die Bundeserneuerung unterstrichen⁽¹⁶⁾. Die rahmende Mitteilung über den Vollzug der Bundeserneuerung in V. 10,27 ist aufs Engste mit der abschließenden Erzählung von der Rückkehr des Mose verbunden. Es deutet sich in V. 10 in den Wundern, die das Volk sehen wird, schon an und setzt sich in V. 27 in den Worten fort, die Mose aufschreiben soll, weil Gott den Bund "im Sinne dieser Worte" schließt. So weist dieser Bundestext auf die Bundesurkunde von Ex 24 zurück, die sich selbst im Duktus der Sinai-Perikope als "vermittelter Dekalog"⁽¹⁷⁾ darstellt. Das wiederum nimmt Ex 34 dadurch auf, dass Gott selbst schließlich auf die Tafeln "die Bundesworte" schreibt (V. 28).

3. Mose mit dem Wort Gottes und als Wort Gottes

Die angesprochenen intertextuellen Bezüge und Analogien zwischen Ex 24 und Ex 34 unterstreichen den genannten Aspekt eines Bundestextes. Am Ende seines vierzigstägigen Bergaufenthaltes erhält Mose in Ex 31 die von Gott beschriebenen Tafeln; ganz entsprechend – nach 40 Tagen und Nächten – beschreibt JHWH die von Mose zurecht gehauenen Steine, so dass Mose dann mit dem "Wort Gottes" zum Volk zurückkehren kann. Mose liest dem Volk aber nicht diese Worte von den Tafeln vor – wie man erwarten könnte –, sondern verkündigt dem Volk die Grundlage der Bundeserneuerung. Bevor es aber dazu kommt, sieht das Volk das strahlende Angesicht des Mose, was V. 32 durch einen pointierten Neueinsatz ("daraufhin") hervorhebt. Dieses strahlende Angesicht, nicht das von Gott Aufgeschriebene und auch nicht das von Gott Gehörte und von Mose Aufgeschriebene, vermittelt dem Volk die Nähe Gottes. Die so vermittelte Gottesnähe wirkt auf das Volk als Hinweis darauf, dass der Offenbarungsmittler ganz und gar in seinem Auftrag, der Übermittlung des Gotteswortes, aufgeht. Die Aussage findet eine Verstärkung darin, dass das Motiv vom strahlenden Angesicht weiter entfaltet wird, nachdem zuvor expressis verbis festgehalten worden ist, dass Mose zu reden aufhört. Nachdem er dem Volk das Wort Gottes übermittelt hat, legt er eine Decke, einen Schleier, über sein Angesicht. Um was es sich bei dieser "Decke" מסכה handelt, ist allein schon deshalb schwer zu sagen, weil der

⁽¹⁵⁾ Zum je eigenen Verständnis der benutzten Wendungen "aufgrund all dieser Worte" (Ex 24,8) und "im Sinne dieser Worte" (Ex 34,27) vgl. DOHMEN, *Exodus*, 372-373.

⁽¹⁶⁾ In V. 10 kann bei der Konstruktion "siehe" plus Partizip von einem Futurum instans ausgegangen werden, vgl. R. BARTELMUS, *Einführung in das biblische Hebräisch* (Zürich 1994) 64; in V. 27 liegt mit der Konstruktion *x-qatal* ein klassischer Koinzidenzfall vor, vgl. W. MAYER, *Untersuchungen zur Formsprache der babylonischen 'Gebetsbeschwörungen'* (Rom 1976) 187-201; H. IRSIGLER, "Einführung in das biblische Hebräisch I" (St. Ottilien 1981) 79.

⁽¹⁷⁾ DOHMEN, *Das gesprochene Wort*, 48-50.

Begriff nur im vorliegenden Abschnitt innerhalb der Hebräischen Bibel vorkommt ⁽¹⁸⁾. Gleichwohl ergibt sich aus der Beschreibung der nachfolgenden Verse, dass es sich um ein Verhüllen und Enthüllen seines Angesichtes handelt. Man hat hier oft an eine Analogie zu Kultmasken gedacht, wie sie aus dem Alten Orient bekannt sind ⁽¹⁹⁾. Doch ist zu beachten, dass diese Kultmasken getragen wurden, um bei der Verkündigung göttlicher Botschaften den menschlichen Verkündiger zu "verstecken". Dem gegenüber bedeckt Mose sein Angesicht nicht während des Sprechens mit Gott oder mit Israel, sondern nur, wenn er nicht spricht. In Verbindung mit dem Abschluss dieses Redens in V. 33 lässt sich schon erkennen, dass diese Decke auf dem Angesicht des Mose nicht schützen soll — weder die Israeliten vor dem Strahlen, noch Mose vor Gott —, sondern das Eigene der Vermittlung zwischen Gott und Israel soll dem Profanen entzogen und so bewahrt werden.

Der Aspekt des Bewahrens öffnet eine Perspektive in die Zukunft hinein, die die nun folgenden Verse des Abschnittes herausstellen. In VV. 34-35 wird nicht die Erzählung fortgesetzt, sondern die hebräische Syntax signalisiert an dieser Stelle durch die an einen Infinitiv angeschlossenen Imperfektformen, dass hier eine generelle Aussage für die Zukunft formuliert wird ⁽²⁰⁾.

Das zuerst angesprochene Hineingehen und Herausgehen deutet auf das künftige, aber in Ex 25–31 schon angekündigte und dort gedeutete Zeltheiligtum hin, wozu auch der für die Zukunft in Verbindung mit diesem Heiligtum stehende Hinweis auf das Sprechen zu und mit Mose zentral gehört (vgl. Ex 29,42-45). Dort, wo bei den Anweisungen zum Heiligtum der Sinn des Zeltes ausgesprochen wird ⁽²¹⁾, und es als "Begegnungszelt" schon gedeutet wird, wird eine unmittelbare Verbindung zwischen der Gottesbegegnung und dem Sprechen durch Mose erwähnt: "Am Eingang des Begegnungszeltes, vor JHWH, dort, wo ich euch begegnen werde, um mit dir zu sprechen" (Ex 29,42). Daraus ist zu erkennen, dass der Zentralgedanke der Offenbarungsmittlung, wie ihn Ex 29,42 ausspricht, hier in Ex 34 am Motiv der "Decke" über dem strahlenden Angesicht des Mose verdeutlicht wird. Wenn Mose sein Angesicht also nur verdeckt, wenn er nicht mit Gott spricht oder dem Volk Gottes Willen kündigt ⁽²²⁾, dann steht dieses strahlende

⁽¹⁸⁾ Vgl. C. HOUTMAN, *Exodus* (Leuven 2000) III, 729-730.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Vgl. zur Diskussion F. DUMERMUTH, "Moses strahlendes Gesicht", *ThZ* 17, (1961) 241-248; W. H. PROPP, "The Skin of Moses' Face – Transfigured or Disfigured?", *CBQ* 49, (1987) 375-386; C. HOUTMAN, "Het verheerlijkte gezicht van Mozes", *NedThT* 43 (1989) 1-10.

⁽²⁰⁾ Dies betont auch schon Nachmanides, vgl. *Ramban (Nachmanides), Commentary on the Tora. Exodus* (ed. C.B. CHAVEL) (New York 1973) 594.

⁽²¹⁾ Grundlegend dazu B. JANOWSKI, "Ich will in eurer Mitte wohnen. Struktur und Genese der exilischen Schekina-Theologie", DERS., *Gottes Gegenwart in Israel* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1993) 119-147.

⁽²²⁾ Es scheint Folge der eigenwilligen Interpretation des Abschnittes durch Paulus in 2 Kor 3,14, wo davon ausgegangen wird, dass Mose vor den Israeliten sein Gesicht abgedeckt habe, zu sein, wenn die Beschreibung in Ex 34 nicht präzise wahrgenommen wird, dass nämlich Mose bei jeglichem Reden — ob mit Gott oder Volk — den Schleier von seinem Angesicht nimmt. Diesem Missverständnis ist auch F.-J. VERSPOHL, Michelangelo, erlegen, und er folgt aus dem nicht verdeckten Angesicht sogar, dass "Moses (...) demzufolge von Michelangelo im Anblick Gottes dargestellt (ist)" (56). Vom Bibeltext in Ex 34 her ist dies möglich, aber nicht notwendig, weil Mose den Schleier eben auch ablegt, wenn er mit dem Volk spricht.

Angesicht des Mose für die Nähe Gottes bei seinem Volk in der von Mose vermittelten Offenbarung. Deckt also Mose sein Angesicht nur dann auf, wenn er entweder mit Gott spricht oder mit Israel, dann "erscheint" Mose schließlich nur noch in der ihm eigenen Funktion als Mittler der göttlichen Offenbarung. Mose wird also geradezu mit der von ihm vermittelten Offenbarung identifiziert. Und deshalb bleibt die Nähe Gottes auch über den Tod des Mose hinaus für Israel bestehen, insofern nämlich gerade von der vorliegenden Stelle an, "Mose" zum Inbegriff der von ihm vermittelten Offenbarung, der "Tora", wird.

Es erscheint auf den ersten Blick wie eine kleine unbedeutende stilistische Besonderheit, die aber bei genauerem Hinsehen das Wesen der Offenbarung noch einmal prägnant zusammenfasst: Beim letzten Satz von V. 35 ist nämlich nicht klar, wer Subjekt des Kommens und des Sprechens ist. Bedeckt Mose sein Angesicht, bis er wieder eintritt, um mit Gott zu sprechen, oder bis zum Kommen Gottes, um mit ihm zu sprechen? Diese Uneindeutigkeit und Offenheit kommt an dieser Stelle aber nicht unvermittelt. Wenige Verse zuvor, nach der Mitteilung der Gebote zur Bundeserneuerung findet sich in V. 28b auch schon eine ähnliche sprachliche Offenheit, die zuerst an ein Schreiben des Mose denken lässt, dann aber rückwirkend deutlich macht, dass es sich hier um das Schreiben Gottes handelt (s.o.). Durch die Uneindeutigkeit in diesem Satz wird aber auch eine innere Relation zwischen dem von Gott geschriebenen Dekalogtext und dem von Mose aufzuschreibenden Text zur Bundeserneuerung von Ex 34 hergestellt. Vielleicht ist die Offenheit im vorliegenden V. 35 als solche gewollt, um die dialogische Struktur des Offenbarungsverständnisses noch einmal herauszustreichen. Deutlich durch Anspielungen an die offene Formulierung von V. 28 ist aber der Hinweis auf die bleibende Funktion des Wortes Gottes, das selbst als von Gott aufgeschriebenes nur durch Mose weiter vermittelt wird. Wie gesehen leitet der Abschnitt schon über zum Verständnis des Heiligtums, das als "Begegnungszelt" geradezu den Raum der Übermittlung der Nähe Gottes bildet. Was sich im strahlenden Angesicht des Mose abzeichnet und durch die Verhüllung mit der Decke betont wird, ist die bleibende Gegenwart Gottes in seinem Wort, d.h. im Wort der Heiligen Schrift. Diesen Aspekt bestätigt auch Paulus — bei seiner im Übrigen eigenwilligen Interpretation⁽²³⁾ —, von Ex 34,29-35 in 2 Kor 3,14, weil er schon vom "Lesen des Mose" spricht und durch die parallele Formulierung "Lesen des Alten Bundes" sicherstellt, dass er die Hl. Schrift meint⁽²⁴⁾, wenn er hier von Mose spricht. Dass Paulus diese Identifikation gerade im Kontext der Erwähnung der "Decke" auf dem Angesicht des Mose vollzieht, ist wohl kein Zufall, denn die Erzählung von der Rückkehr des Mose vom Berg Sinai mit der strahlenden Haut des Angesichts in Ex 34,29-35 hat den Übergang von Mose als Offenbarungs-

⁽²³⁾ Die im Bibeltext von Ex 34 nicht direkt genannte Funktion der Decke nutzt Paulus, um einen eigenen, weit über Ex 34 hinausgehenden Gedanken einzubringen, wenn er schreibt: "Weil wir eine solche Hoffnung haben, treten wir mit großem Freimut auf, nicht wie Mose, der über sein Gesicht eine Hülle legte, damit die Israeliten das Verblenden des Glanzes nicht sahen." (2 Kor 3,12-13); vgl. H.-J. KLAUCK, *Zweiter Korinther-Brief* (NEB; Würzburg 1986) 39.

⁽²⁴⁾ Zum Hintergrund der Rede vom "alten Bund" an dieser Stelle vgl. N. LOHFINK; *Der niemals gekündigte Bund* (Freiburg 1989) 48-54.

mittler zum einzigartigen Träger dieser Offenbarung Gottes narrativ schon entfaltet. Wenn der Biograph Michelangelos, Giorgio Vasari, davon berichtet, dass die Juden seinerzeit am Sabbat zur Mose-Statue des Michelangelo strömten, dann zeigt das, dass man erkannt hatte, dass Michaelangelo von Ex 34,29-35 her ein Bild des Wortes Gottes, der Tora, geschaffen hat. Man kann und darf den Mose des Michelangelo, der aus der Szene mit dem strahlenden Angesicht heraus gestaltet ist, durchaus als ein Bild der Tora betrachten.

*
* *

Ausgehend von der Frage nach dem biblischen Hintergrund der berühmten Mose-Skulptur des Michelangelo wird der Abschnitt Ex 34,29-35 untersucht. Die Erzählung stellt die Rückkehr des Mose vom Berg Sinai mit dem "strahlenden Angesicht" als markanten Abschluss des Sinai-Bundes in der Bundeserneuerungsszene dar. Durch das Motiv der "Decke" zum Verhüllen des Angesichts des Mose wird schließlich hervorgehoben, dass der Offenbarungsmittler Mose mit dem übermittelten Gotteswort identifiziert wird. Dies ist die Grundlage für die Gleichsetzung von Mose und Tora und den daraus erwachsenen Gedanken von der gegenwart Gottes im Wort der Hl. Schrift.

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